



Disability Services Request for Housing Accommodations Form

The Office of Disability Services is responsible for coordinating and ensuring equal access for students to courses, program, services, and activities offered by Mars Hill University. The process to formally declare a disability and to request housing accommodations is outlined below. For further information or questions, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS).

Housing Disability Accommodation Request Process:

- 1) **Request and Verification:** In order to initiate a request for reasonable accommodations students should submit **this form** along with reliable professional verification via **the *MHU Housing Request Professional Verification Form*** directly to the Disability Services Coordinator. Requests for housing accommodations along with supporting health care provider documentation should be submitted as early as possible and preferably by **June 1 for Fall Semester** and **November 1 for Spring Semester**. While all completed requests will be evaluated in a timely manner to determine eligibility and feasibility, students need to be aware that requests submitted within **60 days** of the need for occupancy may not be guaranteed for the start of the semester.

Email/Scan (preferred method):	kkoontz@mhu.edu
Mailing Address:	PO Box 6714 MHU Mars Hill, NC 28754
Delivered:	306 Wellness Center in the Robinson Infirmary Building.
Fax (Please call or email to confirm receipt):	828-689-1445
Phone:	828-689-1410

Regular office hours occur Mondays-Wednesdays 8:30-4:00 during August-May. A more limited office schedule is maintained during June and July, but emails and phone messages are checked regularly.

- 2) **Review:** The DS Coordinator will review the completed request along with supporting professional documentation in consultation with the Director of Residential Life and/or Disability Services Committee to determine eligibility for requested housing accommodations. The DS Coordinator will inform the student within 10 business days following the receipt of the completed request of any decision or of any further recommended action required regarding the request of housing accommodations. (Financial consideration may be granted to students whose documentation clearly establishes that a medical condition necessitates specific housing requirements in order for the student to access university programs and services. However, requests for disability housing accommodations must be approved by the Office of Disability Services in advance of the semester for financial consideration to be applied.)

Information provided to the ODS is maintained in a confidential manner as outlined in the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Disability-related records are maintained separately from academic files and are excluded from free access under FERPA. Disability information is shared only on a limited basis within the University only when there is compelling need to communicate specific information with MHU faculty and staff in order to evaluate and achieve implementation of reasonable accommodations.

MARS HILL UNIVERSITY
REGISTRATION AND REQUEST FOR HOUSING ACCOMMODATION SERVICES

NAME _____ PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PERMANENT ADDRESS _____

ANTICIPATED MAJOR: _____ Check One: _____ Entering Student _____ Current Student

ANTICIPATED ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATION: *FRESHMAN* _____ *SOPHOMORE* _____ *JUNIOR* _____ *SENIOR* _____

INITIAL SEMESTER FOR REQUESTED SERVICES FALL _____ SPRING _____ YEAR _____

PLEASE IDENTIFY YOUR DISABILITY OR PHYSICAL/MENTAL IMPAIRMENT THAT SUBSTANTIALLY IMPACTS LIVING IN THE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT AND CAN BE VERIFIED BY PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTATION:

PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR REQUESTED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION(S) (ie AC; close campus proximity; single; restroom access; ground level access; emotional support animal; service dog; etc.):

PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY THE REQUESTED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION(S) IS NECESSARY FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO ACCESS AND PARTICIPATE IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING/PROGRAMS BECAUSE OF YOUR DISABILITY:

By signing below, I certify that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that eligibility for specific accommodations/services is determined on an individual basis and only with supportive documentation. I authorize the Office of Disability Services to disclose information about my disability and functional limitations to MHU faculty and staff directly involved in providing academic or support services as needed*.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

*All documentation and records provided will be maintained in a confidential manner as outlined in the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Disability information is shared only on a limited basis within the University and then only when there is compelling reason for the individual seeking the information to have knowledge of a specific aspect of this confidential information. Disability-related records are maintained separately from academic files and are excluded from free access under FERPA.



DISABILITY SERVICES DOCUMENTATION/VERIFICATION GUIDELINES

Mars Hill University students who are requesting timely, reasonable accommodations on the basis of a declared, documented disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection under these laws is provided to students who have a disability defined as a physical or mental impairment that *substantially* limits one or more major life activities relative to the general population.

For housing accommodation requests, a completed MHU Disability Services Housing Accommodation Request Form and third-party professional verification as described according to the type of need listed below must be submitted directly to the Disability Services Coordinator. Completed requests will be reviewed within 10 business days upon receipt and students will be informed via student email if the requested accommodation is approved as disability accommodation that is necessary and reasonable. Housing accommodation requests should be submitted as early as possible, preferably prior to June 1 for Fall Semester and November 1 for Spring Semester. While all completed requests will be evaluated in a timely manner to determine eligibility and feasibility, students need to be aware that requests submitted within **60 days** of the need for occupancy may not be guaranteed.

Documentation Guidelines for General Housing accommodation Requests (ie AC, close campus proximity or ground level access, specific restroom needs, off-campus housing, etc.)

Students who wish to request a housing accommodation because of a disability should have their physician or treating professional submit a **letter** containing the following information:

1. Verification that the student has a disability, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. How long the treating professional has known the patient;
3. Methods of evaluation used in making the diagnosis;
4. Symptoms and effects of the diagnosis/disability;
5. Type of housing accommodation being recommended;
6. Description of how the requested accommodation (s) will alleviate the symptoms or effects of the diagnosis/disability;
7. The level of need for the requested accommodation and the anticipated consequences of not receiving the requested accommodation.

The letter should be on letterhead, dated and signed by the physician or treating professional. (Documentation on prescription pads is not acceptable.)

Documentation Guidelines for an Assistance Animal (AA) or Emotional Support (ESA) Housing Accommodation: MHU adheres to the US Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards regarding Assistance Animals. Assistance Animals are not required to have had special training but may perform work; provide assistance; perform tasks or services; or provide emotional support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of a person's existing disability. Assistance Animals are only approved for a student's residence and are not approved to be in public buildings /campus venues or in other students' residence halls. To request permission to have an Assistance Animal (AA) the university requires third-party documentation/verification that meets the following standards and includes the following information:

1. The student shall provide verification from a reliable third party is who familiar with the individual's disability and the necessity for the requested accommodation. A reliable third-party includes, but is not limited to, a physician or other medical professional, or from a non-medical or social service agency.
2. Verifiable documentation should come from a qualified healthcare or mental health professional who is familiar with the student's disability and the necessity for the requested accommodation. Form letters/certificates from commercial websites guaranteed to provide letters of verification for a fee from third parties who have no established professional relationship with a student are not considered to be reliable verification.
3. Verification may be completed on the **MHU Housing Accommodation Request Verification Form**, or the same information may be provided instead on official letterhead.
4. The provider's statement should include:
 - a. Verification that the student has a disability, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
 - b. Description of how having the animal will alleviate one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of the person's disability.
5. Upon approval, the student will be asked to meet with Disability Services Coordinator to review the **MHU Service/Assistance Animal Policy and Care Agreement**.

Documentation Guidelines for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Service Animal (SA) Accommodation: A service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. In most cases, service dogs are allowed to accompany the student for the purpose of doing work in public buildings and campus venues of the campus.

Any student who intends to have a Service Dog reside within University Housing needs to arrange to meet with Disability Services Coordinator to register their dog and review the **MHU Service/Assistance Animal Policy and Care Agreement**.

When the need for a service dog is not readily apparent, students requesting the accommodation of a service dog shall provide verification from a reliable third party is who familiar with the individual's disability and the necessity for the requested accommodation. A reliable third-party includes, but is not limited to, a doctor or other medical professional, or from a non medical or social service agency.

The **provider's statement** should include:

1. Verification that the student has a disability, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. Information that describes how the Service Dog is required due to the functional limitations of the requesting student's disability;
3. A description of what work or tasks the Service Dog has been trained to perform for the benefit of the requesting student.

The letter should be on letterhead, dated and signed by the physician or treating professional. (Documentation on prescription pads is not acceptable.)