

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Purpose

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) introduced laws and measures aimed at ending the discrimination faced by many disabled people.

As a public authority and a provider of services to the public, NIPSO has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people are not prevented from using our service because they have a disability.

What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment is a change a service provider is required to make to ensure that a disabled person receives the same service, as far as this is possible, as someone who is not disabled. Reasonable adjustments aim to remove, or at the very least minimise, any disadvantage experienced by the disabled person.

NIPSO will always aim to remove barriers in the first instance. Where this is not possible, we will endeavour to consider other measures that we can adopt to provide our service, such as providing the service in a different way.

Providing reasonable adjustments

In our interactions with members of the public we will aim to establish as early as possible whether any reasonable adjustments may be necessary. We will liaise with the service user and other relevant parties to assess, identify and implement reasonable adjustments in adapting our services and overcoming barriers, maintaining confidentiality as relevant.

We will include a note on our published documents indicating that we can provide the document in an alternative format on request. We will also work with representative groups and others to raise awareness of the policy, which will be published on our website.

Examples of Types of reasonable adjustments we can offer

Reasonable adjustments are assessed for, identified and implemented on a case-by-case basis. To make sure we can offer the right adjustment we will discuss the requirements with the person concerned and seek to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances. Some examples of what type of adjustments can be made include:

- Providing documents or correspondence in a larger font size

- Providing auxiliary aids
- Extension of time limits
- Allowing a person who has a learning disability more time than would usually be allowed to provide further information
- Using email or the telephone in preference to hard copy letters
- Speaking clearly to the people using our services and offering additional time to cover the issues they need to discuss
- Using plain English appropriate to the person we are dealing with and avoiding jargon
- Providing information on audio tape, either informally or through a specialist transcription agency
- Translating documents or correspondence into Braille
- Communication through a representative or intermediary
- Allowing for individuals to take breaks in interviews or meetings

Our response to requests for reasonable adjustments

We aim to assess, identify and implement reasonable adjustments as soon as is reasonably possible. Sometimes, this can be done within a short time frame, other times it may take longer to implement adjustments in full. We will work closely with service users and all parties concerned throughout this process.

The consideration of whether an adjustment is 'reasonable' is judged against the following:

- The effectiveness of the adjustment(s) in preventing the disadvantage
- The extent to which it is practical for us to make the adjustment(s)
- The cost and availability of resources, including external assistance and finance
- The extent to which making the adjustment(s) would disrupt the Office's activities.
- Will the adjustment help in overcoming the difficulty that the disabled person may have?
- Would the adjustment cause disruption to others?

Monitoring

A staff member will record and monitor the effectiveness of those reasonable adjustments that have been requested and made, maintaining confidentiality as relevant. This will also enable us to identify any additional adjustments that may be required. This will allow us to monitor the services we provide and help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve our services.

Dealing with complaints

All complaints about the arrangements we have made for providing reasonable adjustments will be dealt with via our Standards of Service Policy.