## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY UNITED STATES MINT WASHINGTON, D.C. 20220

#### **United States Mint Directive**

MD 3003.05 September 2021

#### **Reasonable Accommodations**

- 1. <u>PURPOSE</u>: This revised directive establishes United States Mint (Mint) policy and procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation for employees and applicants with disabilities.
- 2. **SCOPE**: This directive applies to all Mint facilities and offices, and all employees and applicants for employment with the Mint.
- 3. **OUTCOME**: To comply with the requirement to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified employees and applicants with disabilities, absent an undue hardship, and create clear procedures and processes under which requests for reasonable accommodations are addressed.

## 4. **POLICY:**

- a. The Mint is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to qualified employees and applicants for employment to ensure individuals with disabilities enjoy full access to equal employment opportunity (EEO), unless the Mint can demonstrate that a particular accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program. Reasonable accommodation shall be provided for individuals with a disability when needed to:
  - (1) Ensure equal opportunity in the job application process;
  - (2) Perform the essential functions of a position held or desired; and
  - (3) Enjoy equal access to benefits and privileges of employment as enjoyed by individuals without a disability.
- b. Requests for reasonable accommodation will be processed and reasonable accommodations will be provided by the Mint where appropriate, in a timely, efficient, and cost-effective manner in accordance with policy and procedures contained herein.
- c. The Mint may provide a reasonable accommodation other than the item or accommodation requested, if the alternative is effective.

Generally, this will be done when the alternative is more efficient, cost effective, or has less impact on the business operations of the Mint.

## 5. **DEFINITIONS**:

- a. <u>Deciding Official</u>. An individual who has authority to approve or deny a request for a reasonable accommodation. The Deciding Official is generally the employee's first-level supervisor or any supervisor in the employee's chain of command or, for applicants during the application process, the servicing Human Resources (HR) Officer.
- b. <u>Disability</u>. A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), a reasonable accommodation is not required to be provided to an individual who only meets the "regarded as" definition of a disability.
- c. <u>Essential Functions</u>. The fundamental job duties of the employment position the individual with a disability holds or desires. This does not include marginal functions of the positon. A job function may be considered essential for any of several reasons, including but not limited to the following: the reason the position exists is to perform that function; there is a limited number of employees available among whom the performance of that job function can be distributed; and/or the function may be highly specialized so that the incumbent in the position is hired for his or her expertise or ability to perform the particular function.
- d. <u>Extenuating Circumstances</u>. Factors that could not reasonably have been anticipated or avoided in advance of the request for accommodation or situations in which unforeseen or unavoidable events prevent prompt processing and delivery of an accommodation (e.g., identified software is not compatible with existing equipment, equipment delivery delayed due to inclement weather).
- e. <u>Genetic Information</u>. As defined by the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008, genetic information includes information concerning the manifestation of disease/disorder in family members ("family medical history"), information about an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received

genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

- f. <u>Individual with a Disability</u>. For the purpose of providing a reasonable accommodation, an "individual with a disability" is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of that person's major life activities or who has a record of such an impairment
- g. <u>Interactive Process</u>. The process by which the individual requesting an accommodation and the Deciding Official discuss the request for accommodation, determine whether an accommodation will be provided, and examine potential alternative accommodations.
- h. Major Life Activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, working, and the operation of a major bodily function. Major bodily functions include functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin; normal cell growth; and digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system.
- i. <u>Mental Impairment</u>. Any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual disability organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
- j. <u>Physical Impairment</u>. Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems, such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine.
- k. Reasonable Accommodation. Any modification or adjustment to the job application process, work environment, or the way things are customarily done that enables a qualified individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job duties, or enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment that are enjoyed by individuals without

disabilities. Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to, making existing facilities accessible; job restructuring; part-time or modified work schedules; reassignment to a vacant position; acquisition or modifications of equipment or devices; appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials, or policies; providing qualified readers or interpreters; and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

- I. Reassignment. Reasonable accommodation of last resort, that, absent undue hardship, is provided to employees (not applicants) who, because of a disability, can no longer perform the essential functions of their job, with or without reasonable accommodation. Reassignments are made only to funded vacant positions, at the same or lower grade level, and for employees who are qualified to fill the vacant position. Informing an employee that she/he may apply for or otherwise compete for a position (unless it is at a higher grade level) does not satisfy the obligation of appropriate officials to review vacancies to determine if there is another position at the same or lower grade which the employee is qualified to perform. If the employee is qualified for the position, she/he will be reassigned to the job and will not have to compete.
- m. Receiving Official. Individual designated to receive requests for reasonable accommodation. The Mint has designated the local EEO Manager or Specialist from each field facility to receive requests from all employees at that facility. The headquarters' Disability Program Manager (DPM) will receive requests from headquarters and Fort Knox employees. The names and contact information for the local EEO Managers/Specialist in the field facilities and headquarters' DPM will be publicized to all employees and posted on the Mint intranet website and bulletin boards. For applicants, the HR Specialist with whom the applicant has contact in connection with the application process is designated to receive the requests.
- n. <u>Reconsideration/Appeal Process.</u> A voluntary process through which an individual can request reconsideration or appeal of denial of reasonable accommodation, regardless of whether the individual has started the EEO complaint process.
- o. <u>Undue hardship</u>. An employer is not obligated to provide a reasonable accommodation if it would cause an undue hardship. Several factors should be considered in determining undue hardship, including: the nature of the accommodation needed; the overall financial resources of the facility involved in providing the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at this facility; the

size, number of employees, and number, type, and location of facilities of the Mint; the type of operation(s) including the composition, structure and functions of the workforce, and the geographic separateness and administrative or fiscal relationship of the facility involved in providing the reasonable accommodation; and the impact of the accommodation upon the operation of the facility. Determination of undue hardship is made on a case-by-case basis. Undue hardship refers not only to financial difficulty, but to reasonable accommodations that are unduly extensive, substantial or disruptive, or those that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business.

- p. <u>Vacancy Search</u>. An inquiry by the Human Capital Directorate (HCD) to determine whether there are any available vacant positions or positions that are expected to become available within a reasonable amount of time for which an employee may be qualified, with or without a reasonable accommodation. A vacancy search, for a position at the same or lower grade level, is performed to determine whether reassignment to a vacant position is possible as a form of reasonable accommodation. A position is considered vacant even if a notice or job announcement seeking applicants is posted.
- q. <u>Voluntary Modification</u>. A change in the work environment, made outside of the reasonable accommodation process, to address an employee's impairment-related needs without establishing that an individual has a disability. This is most appropriate when the modification is easy and inexpensive, such as a request for an ergonomic computer mouse or keyboard.

#### 6. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- a. The Diversity Management and Civil Rights (DMCR) Office will develop and issue policy and procedures governing the provision of reasonable accommodation; oversee and evaluate the Mint's reasonable accommodation process to ensure compliance with the governing laws, regulations, executive orders, and policy related to the provision of reasonable accommodation; and advise managers, supervisors, and officials regarding such laws, regulations, executive orders, and policies. The DMCR Office will record, monitor, and maintain a status report on all active reasonable accommodations to ensure proper oversight of the process.
- b. <u>Local EEO Managers/Specialist and Headquarters' Disability</u> <u>Program Manager (DPM)</u> will:

- (1) Serve as Receiving Official, who is the individual designated to receive requests for reasonable accommodation.
- (2) Monitor and track reasonable accommodation requests to ensure timely processing and compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and requirements.
- (3) Provide guidance and recommendations to supervisors and employees on reasonable accommodation policy and procedures as well as requests.
- (4) Advise supervisors and managers of their role and responsibilities in the reasonable accommodation process.
- (5) Request, where appropriate, and review medical documentation required to support a reasonable accommodation request. See <a href="mailto:section7.e.">section 7.e.</a> for guidance about medical documentation.
- (6) Prepare and submit quarterly and annual reports to the headquarters' Diversity Management and Civil Rights Office.
- (7) Coordinate a request for a vacancy search for reassignment as a reasonable accommodation with HCD, the Deciding Official, and the employee when it is determined that an employee with a disability cannot be accommodated in his or her current position or if all other accommodations would cause an undue hardship on the Mint, and the employee has stated that he/she would be interested in a possible reassignment.
- (8) Consult with the Deciding Official and his/her first-line supervisor in the event the Deciding Official is inclined to deny a request for a reasonable accommodation.

#### c. The Deciding Official will:

- (1) Forward a copy of his/her decision on each request for accommodation to the local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM as appropriate.
- (2) Respond to requests for accommodation promptly as discussed in section 7.g.
- (3) Initiate, where appropriate, and/or participate in the interactive process as discussed in <u>section 7.c.</u>, to include identifying and considering possible accommodations.
- (4) Respond to requests for reconsideration promptly as discussed in <u>section 7.j.</u>
- (5) Consult with the local EEO Manager or headquarters' DPM for guidance and assistance as required to process a request for reasonable accommodation and request for reconsideration.

- (6) Receive approval from the Associate Director, Office Chief, or Plant Superintendent for any expenditure greater than \$2500 for a reasonable accommodation.
- (7) Consult with his/her first-line supervisor and the local EEO Managers/Specialist or headquarters' DPM prior to denying a request for a reasonable accommodation.
- d. <u>Individual Requesting Reasonable Accommodation or His/her</u> <u>Representative</u> will:
  - (1) Request a reasonable accommodation verbally or in writing.
  - (2) Upon request, provide appropriate medical documentation to the local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM in support of the reasonable accommodation request.
  - (3) Engage in the interactive process with the Deciding Official.
- e. <u>Human Capital Directorate (HCD)</u> will:
  - (1) Conduct and document vacancy searches to identify vacant positions for reassignment as a reasonable accommodation at the request of the local EEO Manager or headquarters' DPM.
  - (2) Review the employee's qualifications, determine the essential functions of a position in consultation with the employee's supervisor, and make the final decision on whether an employee is qualified for a position for reassignment, specifying the grade, pay, and location.
  - (3) Ensure that any offer for a reassignment position as a reasonable accommodation is made promptly.
- f. Onsite Medical Doctor or Other Health Care Provider, at the request of the local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM, will:
  - (1) At the request of the local EEO Manager or headquarters' Disability Program Manager, review and assess the medical information submitted in support of a request for a reasonable accommodation.
  - (2) When necessary, conduct a medical examination of the individual requesting an accommodation to assist in determining whether the individual has a disability and needs an accommodation.

#### 7. CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- a. Requesting a Reasonable Accommodation. An individual with a disability must let the Mint know that he/she needs an adjustment or change at work or in the application process because of a medical condition.
  - (1) Employees and applicants should submit requests for reasonable accommodation to the Receiving Officials as defined in section 5.m.
  - (2) If an employee or applicant submits a request to anyone other than the Receiving Official, that individual must forward the request to the designated Receiving Official as quickly as possible, but not later than three (3) calendar days of receipt. For example, if an employee submits a request for a reasonable accommodation to his/her supervisor, the supervisor must reach out to the designated Receiving Official within three calendar days.
  - (3) A request for a reasonable accommodation may be made by a family member, friend, healthcare professional, or other representative acting on behalf of the applicant or employee with a disability. The request should be made to the Receiving Official. When a representative makes the request, the Receiving Official should contact the individual for whom the request was made to confirm that he/she is requesting a reasonable accommodation.
  - (4) Individuals may request a reasonable accommodation verbally or in writing at any time to their Receiving Official. The request does not have to use any special words, such as "reasonable accommodation," "disability," or "Rehabilitation Act." The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides the following examples:
    - (a) An employee tells her supervisor, "I'm having trouble getting to work at my scheduled starting time because of medical treatments I'm undergoing." This is a request for a reasonable accommodation.
    - (b) An employee tells his supervisor, "I need six weeks off to get treatment for a back problem." This is a request for a reasonable accommodation.
    - (c) A new employee, who uses a wheelchair, informs the employer that her wheelchair cannot fit under the desk in her office. This is a request for a reasonable accommodation.
    - (d) An employee tells his supervisor that he would like a new chair because his present one is uncomfortable. Although this is a request for a change at work, his

statement is insufficient to put the employer on notice that he is requesting a reasonable accommodation. He does not link his need for the new chair with a medical condition.

- (5) Employees requesting a reasonable accommodation should complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request form (see Attachment A - Alternate Format). If a verbal request or written request other than the Reasonable Accommodation Request form is made, the Receiving Official will provide the Reasonable Accommodation Request form to the employee for completion; in any event, however, completion of the form shall not otherwise delay the interactive process. To ensure accurate records, the Receiving Official will also confirm receipt of the request in writing with the individual requesting the accommodation, documenting the date of the verbal request, and the accommodation requested. For requests from applicants, the HR Specialist must submit the Reasonable Accommodation Request form to their local EEO Manager/ Specialist or headquarters' DPM for record keeping purposes.
- (6) The written Reasonable Accommodation Request form and/or any medical documentation establishing the disability, is only required the first time a recurring accommodation (e.g., sign language interpreter; intermittent leave for migraine headaches) is needed; however, each time the same accommodation is needed, the individual should provide at least three business days advance notice to his/her supervisor.
- (7) An individual may request a reasonable accommodation whenever he/she chooses. Approval or denial of a previous accommodation request does not prevent an individual from requesting an accommodation at a later time if circumstances change and he/she needs an accommodation because of limitation from a disability.
- (8) Reasonable Accommodation requests can be submitted to the local EEO Manager/Specialist or the DPM, in person, via email or through the following Office accounts:
  - (a) Headquarters/Fort Knox: <a href="mailto:DMCR-HQ@usmint.treas.gov">DMCR-HQ@usmint.treas.gov</a>
  - (b) West Point: DMCR-WP@usmint.treas.gov
  - (c) San Francisco: DMCR-SF@usmint.treas.gov
  - (d) Denver: DMCR-DN@usmint.treas.gov
  - (e) Philadelphia: DMCR-PH@usmint.treas.gov

- (9) In accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3)(i), the Mint will make available to job applicants and employees, copies of its written procedures and associated forms in accessible formats upon request. An accessible format is a format that meets an individual's particular need, including braille, large print, audio files, etc.
- Processing the Request for Reasonable Accommodation. b. The reasonable accommodation process begins as soon as the request for accommodation is made verbally or received in writing, whichever occurs first. After a request is received, the Receiving Official will forward the request for accommodation to the appropriate Deciding Official for a decision and notify the individual requesting the accommodation to whom the request was forwarded for processing. In making a decision, the Deciding Official should confer with the Local EEO Manager/ Specialist and/or Headquarters' Disability Program Manager (DPM). The Deciding Official must process each request and provide a decision pursuant to section 7.g. If the Deciding Official is out of the office or otherwise unavailable when an action or decision is needed to process a request, the individual appointed as their acting designee or delegated authority will also serve as the Deciding Official to continue processing the reasonable accommodation request within the required timeframe and avoid unnecessary delay. The time frames discussed in section 7.g. will not be suspended or extended because of unavailability of the Deciding Official. The Receiving Official will monitor and track the process to closure but will have no decision-making role.
- c. <u>Interactive Process.</u> The reasonable accommodation process is interactive, meaning the individual requesting the accommodation and the Deciding Official shall discuss the reasonable accommodation request, the requesting individual's functional limitations, and possible accommodations that effectively meet the individual's disability-related needs. Communication throughout the entire process is critical, especially when the specific limitation or barrier is unclear, an effective accommodation is not obvious, or different types of reasonable accommodations are being considered.
  - (1) The Deciding Official will work with the requesting employee to proactively search for and consider possible accommodations, consulting with appropriate resources for assistance. The individual requesting the accommodation should, to the extent possible, help identify an effective accommodation. A list of reasonable accommodation resources is provided in <u>Attachment B</u>.

- (2) Mint personnel (e.g. Human Resources staff or Information Technology staff) may be contacted to obtain information or assistance necessary to process a request and must acknowledge and/or respond within 2 business days.
- (3) A manager, supervisor, or other authorized official may provide voluntary modifications when an employee or applicant requests an accommodation or modification that is simple and/or inexpensive to provide. Generally, medical documentation is not necessary for a voluntary modification; however, if medical documentation is necessary, the Mint must treat the request for accommodation or modification as a reasonable accommodation and the parties must engage in the interactive process.
- (4) Approval of a voluntary modification does not mean and may not be used to imply, the Mint has determined the individual has a disability or that any reasonable accommodation is needed.
- d. Reassignment. An employee may be reassigned to a vacant position, at the same or lower grade level, as a reasonable accommodation of last resort, only if it has been determined that no other effective accommodation is available to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his/her current job or if all other accommodations would cause an undue hardship on the Mint. Reassignment must be considered as an accommodation prior to terminating an employee who is unable to be accommodated in his or her current position. While there is no obligation to create a position for the purpose of reassignment, an employee who qualifies for a vacant position, can be placed non-competitively in the position as a reasonable accommodation.
  - (1) Upon being notified that an employee cannot be accommodated in his or her current position, the local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM will request a Mint vacancy search for reassignment as a reasonable accommodation, unless the employee declines the offer for a vacancy search.
  - (2) At the outset of the vacancy search, the employee shall be asked to provide an updated resume or brief description of his/her current skills and accomplishments, and identify the

lowest grade level and the locations he/she will accept. The vacancy search will be conducted within the parameters identified by the employee regarding the lowest grade level and locations the employee is willing to accept. To assist in this process, the local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM will be responsible for requesting the above information from the employee in consultation with HCD. Employees are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to ensure the greatest consideration for reassignment opportunities. Failure to provide such information may result in the inability to find a position for reassignment.

- (3) In determining Mint positions available for reassignment, HCD will review and identify all funded vacant Mint positions and Mint positions expected to become vacant within **thirty (30) business days** from the date the vacancy search started: (1) for which the employee may be qualified with or without reasonable accommodation; and (2) that fall within the parameters established by the employee's preferred grade(s) and location(s) he/she is willing to accept as outlined in 7.d.(2). The Mint vacancy search will be conducted for **thirty (30)** business days.
- (4) HCD makes the decision on whether an employee is qualified for a vacant position and ensures that the position identified is an approved and funded vacant position.
- (5) If the Mint vacancy search is completed and no vacant, equivalent or lower level position is identified, a Treasury-wide vacancy search will be requested by the Mint headquarters' DPM. Upon this request, the Department of Treasury's DPM will conduct a Treasury-wide search for **thirty (30) business days**. A representative from the headquarters' HCD and the headquarters' DPM must jointly consult with the Associate Director of HCD or designee for guidance before the Treasury-wide search is requested.
- (6) Positions equivalent to the employee's current grade and pay will be considered first. If no such positions are available, positions at a lower grade will be considered if the employee indicated that he/she would accept a lower graded position. If a vacant position is identified in the Mint search, the headquarters' DPM will notify the employee of the results and HCD will coordinate the reassignment offer to be made to the

- employee. If only a vacant position at a lower grade is identified, HCD will keep the position vacant until a Treasury-wide vacancy search is conducted for positions at the employee's current grade level.
- (7) If a vacant position is identified in the Treasury-wide search, the headquarters DPM will notify the employee, his or her supervisor, local EEO Manager/Specialist, and appropriate HCD of the results as quickly as possible, but not later than five (5) business days of receiving notification from the Department of Treasury, barring the need for additional information to clarify the positions identified. The HR Office of the gaining bureau/agency will coordinate the reassignment offer to be made to the employee in consultation with the Mint HCD and headquarters' DPM.
- (8) While the vacancy search is being conducted, the Deciding Official and employee should discuss and consider possible short-term solutions such as the use of leave (accrued paid leave and/or unpaid leave) or temporary assignment until the vacancy search process is completed.
- (9) Employees do not compete for a position identified for reassignment as a reasonable accommodation; however, employees cannot be promoted as part of the reassignment process and are not entitled to reassignment to a position that has higher promotional potential than the employee's current position.
- (10) HCD will forward records of all vacancy searches conducted to their local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM for record keeping. HCD will document the Mint search conducted using the Mint vacancy search forms as appropriate.
- (11) Reassignment may be made to a vacant position outside of the employee's commuting area if the employee is willing to relocate. As with voluntary transfers, the employee must pay for any relocation costs unless a Mint policy provides such payment for employees without a disability.
- (12) Once a reassignment offer is made, the employee has **fourteen (14) business days** to accept or decline the offer. The local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM will record the acceptance or rejection on the *Reasonable*

Accommodation Request or Confirmation of Reasonable Accommodation Request form, whichever is applicable. If the employee accepts the reassignment offer, the Deciding Official must reassign the employee to the identified position with guidance from HCD. The employee is not required to accept the reassignment offer. However, if the employee cannot be accommodated in his or her current position and rejects the reassignment offer, the employee may not be qualified to remain in the position.

- (13) If no suitable vacant position for which the employee is qualified to perform is found in the Treasury-wide vacancy search, the headquarters' DPM will provide written notification of the vacancy search results to the employee as quickly as possible, but not later than **ten (10) business days** from the date of receiving notification from the Department of Treasury. As part of the interactive process, the headquarters' DPM will explain to the employee why a reassignment could not be provided as a reasonable accommodation and document the explanation on the *Reasonable Accommodation Request* form.
- (15) The local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' DPM will explain the reassignment process to the employee using the Reassignment as a Reasonable Accommodation Memorandum of Understanding form (see Attachment C) and provide a copy of the signed form to the employee.
- e. <a href="Medical Documentation">Medical Documentation</a>. If an individual's disability and/or need for accommodation is not obvious or otherwise already known (e.g., clearly visible or already on file), the employee must provide medical documentation to establish they are an individual with a disability as defined in <a href="Section 5.b.">Section 5.b.</a> and an accommodation will assist them with performing the essential functions of their position. The Mint is permitted to have medical documentation reviewed by a medical expert of the Mint's choosing and expense. Failure to provide requested medical documentation or to cooperate with efforts to obtain such documentation may result in denial or delay of the requested accommodation.
  - (1) Medical documentation should not be sought if both the disability and the need for accommodation are obvious or the individual has already provided the agency with sufficient information to establish the existence of a disability and the need for an accommodation.

- (2) The local **Receiving Official** will determine whether medical documentation is needed. If it is needed, the Deciding Official will be notified of the request for accommodation and the need for medical documentation. If medical documentation is not needed, the request for accommodation will be forwarded to the Deciding Official with instructions to proceed with processing the request. The local EEO Manager/Specialist and headquarters' DPM will be guided by the legal authorities cited in this policy in determining whether medical documentation is necessary to support a request for reasonable accommodation and whether an individual has a disability.
- (3) If a determination is made to seek medical information, the Receiving Official will request information about the disability and/or its functional limitations from the individual and/or ask the individual to obtain such information from an appropriate health care professional such as a doctor, occupational therapists, or rehabilitation counselor. The requested medical information must be provided within fifteen (15) business days of the individual's receipt of the request for medical information, absent extenuating circumstances.
- Requested medical information should be sufficient to (4) establish the individual has a disability and needs the reasonable accommodation requested. The employee is encouraged to provide a copy of their Position Description to their health care provider to assist in his/her analysis of the impact of the disability upon the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the position, and the particular accommodation that is needed. The Receiving Official may work with the individual's supervisor/manager or HCD to obtain appropriate information on the nature of the job, essential functions, position description, and/or performance Requests for medical information will follow the plan. requirements set forth in the legal authorities referenced in policy well the Genetic as as Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008.
- (5) The medical information provided in connection with a reasonable accommodation should include: the nature, severity, and duration of the impairment; the activity or activities limited by the impairment and the extent to which the impairment limits the individual's ability to perform the activity

or activities; and/or why the individual requires reasonable accommodation or the particular reasonable accommodation requested, as well as how the reasonable accommodation will assist the individual to apply for a job, perform the essential functions of the job, or enjoy a benefit of the workplace.

- (6)Once the medical documentation is received, the **Receiving** Official and if necessary, on-site or other health care provider at the expense of the Mint, will review and evaluate the medical documentation. If the initial medical documentation provided does not clearly explain the nature of the disability or the need for the reasonable accommodation, the Receiving Official may request additional information. The Receiving Official will explain, in writing, why the information previously provided is insufficient, what additional information is required, and why it is required. In lieu of requesting additional information from the employee, the Receiving Official may ask the employee to sign a limited release, allowing the onsite medical doctor or healthcare provider to contact the individual's health care professional or doctor for the additional information.
- (7) If sufficient information is not provided within the time specified after the second request or the individual refuses to provide the requested information, the Mint may either deny the request for reasonable accommodation or request that the employee be examined by the on-site medical staff or other health care provider, at the expense of the Mint, to obtain the necessary information. Failure to accept the offered medical exam may result in denial of the requested accommodation.
- (8) Due to the confidentiality rules of the Rehabilitation Act, the Receiving Official or onsite medical staff or other health care provider will only share with the Deciding Official information that is needed to make a decision on the reasonable accommodation request, i.e., necessary work restrictions, individual's functional limitations, and accommodations. The Receiving Official or onsite medical staff or other health care provider shall not share the details of the medical condition with the Deciding Official.
- (9) The **Receiving Official** will inform the Deciding Official whether the medical documentation provided demonstrates the individual has a disability, the reasonable accommodation

- is appropriate, and provide relevant information about the individual's functional limitations, as necessary.
- (10) Biannual updates from the employee may be necessary to ensure the accommodation is effective and that the need for accommodation still exists.
- (11) Deciding Officials should not accept medical documentation or request medical documentation from employees. Any medical documentation submitted to the Deciding Official inadvertently should be forwarded to the local EEO Manager/ Specialist or headquarters' DPM and must be kept confidential as described in section 7.f. below.
- f. Confidentiality. All medical information/documentation obtained in connection with a reasonable accommodation request must be kept confidential, including the request for reasonable accommodation and the individual's disability status. The local EEO Manager/ Specialist and the headquarters' DPM will maintain reasonable accommodation records, including medical documentation, in secure files separate from an employee's official personnel file. In addition, individuals who obtain or receive such information are strictly bound by these confidentiality requirements. Information regarding the disability and reasonable accommodation should only be disclosed to individuals who have a "need to know." Depending on the circumstances of each individual case, the following is a non-exhaustive list of individuals who may have a "need to know:"
  - Deciding Officials, supervisors, and managers to implement work restrictions or to provide a reasonable accommodation, but medical information should only be disclosed if absolutely necessary;
  - (2) First aid and safety personnel if the disability could require emergency treatment or special arrangements in emergency situations such as evacuations;
  - (3) Office of Chief Counsel in connection with providing legal advice to Mint officials:
  - (4) Government officials to investigate compliance with the Rehabilitation Act:
  - (5) Worker's compensation offices or insurance carriers in certain situations; and

- (6) Mint EEO officials to maintain records and evaluate and report on performance in processing reasonable accommodation requests.
- (7) HR officers who provide assistance and advice throughout the process.
- (8) Onsite Medical Doctor or Other Health Care Provider as described in section 6.f.

When necessary to disclose medical information, the individual disclosing such information must inform the recipients of the information about the confidentiality requirements that apply.

- g. <u>Time Frames for Processing Reasonable Accommodation Requests and Providing Reasonable Accommodations</u>. The time necessary to process a request will depend largely on the nature of the accommodation and whether it is necessary to obtain supporting documentation. The time frame begins on the date the initial verbal request is made or written request is received, whichever occurs first.
  - (1) Generally, a request for reasonable accommodation shall be processed (including accommodation provided, if approved) as quickly as reasonably possible but not more than **twenty** (20) business days absent extenuating circumstances or a need for supporting medical documentation. Failure to provide the reasonable accommodation in a prompt manner may result in a Rehabilitation Act violation. This includes instances when a particular accommodation can be provided in less than twenty (20) business days, and the Mint fails to do so. The following are examples of accommodations that can be provided within or less than the **twenty (20) business days**:
    - (a) An employee with insulin dependent diabetes asks for two or three breaks each day to test blood sugar levels.
    - (b) An employee with a learning disability asks that the agenda for staff meetings be distributed a day in advance because the disability makes reading difficult and he/she needs more time to prepare.
  - (2) If supporting medical documentation is needed, the Receiving Official will request the medical documentation within the twenty (20) business day timeframe. The twenty (20) business day timeframe is held in abeyance while the

- employee obtains the appropriate documentation. The timeline resumes the day sufficient medical documentation is received.
- (3) Expedited Processing: In certain circumstances, a request for reasonable accommodation should be expedited and the decision should be made sooner than within **twenty (20) business days**. Examples include:
  - (a) Expediting a request for reasonable accommodation to enable an applicant with a disability to apply for a job.
  - (b) Providing an employee with a sign language interpreter for a meeting scheduled to occur within the week.
- (4) Extenuating Circumstances: Extensions due to extenuating circumstances should be rare and limited to situations where it is absolutely necessary. Examples include the following:
  - (a) Back-ordered equipment that cannot be otherwise obtained:
  - (b) Allowing time for the employee with a disability to test equipment on a trial basis to see if it is effective before it is purchased; or
  - (c) An accommodation involving removal of an architectural barrier.
- (5) Where there is a delay in either processing a request for accommodation or providing an accommodation, the Deciding Official must inform the individual in writing of the reason for the delay, and the projected date for providing a decision or reasonable accommodation.
- (6) If there is a delay in either processing a request for accommodation or providing an accommodation, the Deciding Official must consider providing an interim accommodation, such as alternate assistive technology or schedule changes, to facilitate the work of an employee.

When all of the facts and circumstances known to the Mint make it reasonably likely the employee will be entitled to an accommodation, but the accommodation cannot be provided immediately, the Mint will provide the employee with an interim accommodation. This allows the employee to perform some or all of the essential functions of their position, absent an undue hardship. Deciding Officials must provide interim

- accommodations where there is a delay in providing the approved accommodation.
- (7) Mint employees may contact the Office of DMCR to track and/or obtain a status on their reasonable accommodation request. Applicants for employment may contact the point of contact identified on the job announcement or the Human Capital Directorate to request and/or obtain a status on their reasonable accommodation request.
- h. Granting a Reasonable Accommodation Request. If the reasonable accommodation request is approved, the Deciding Official will give the completed Reasonable Accommodation Request form to the individual and provide a copy to the local EEO Manager/ Specialist or headquarters' DPM to discuss implementation of the chosen accommodation. If the accommodation cannot be provided immediately, the Deciding Official must inform the individual in writing of any delays hindering a prompt receipt.
  - (1) If the Deciding Official decides to provide an alternative accommodation other than the one requested, he/she will record on the form both the reason why the specified accommodation was not provided and the reason why he/she believes the alternative accommodation will be effective. If the alternative accommodation is not accepted, the Deciding Official will record the rejection on the form.

A Deciding Official may take temporary or permanent measures, such as granting leave or providing assistive technology, to facilitate the work of an employee. Taking such measures does not mean the Mint has determined the individual has a disability or an accommodation is needed.

Any costs associated with an approved accommodation shall be paid for by the individual's current assigned Directorate/Office.

i. Denial of a Reasonable Accommodation Request. If the reasonable accommodation request is not granted, the Deciding Official will give the completed **Reasonable Accommodation Request form**, whichever is applicable, to the individual and a copy to the local EEO Manager/ Specialist or headquarters' DPM and discuss specifically why the accommodation was denied. The Deciding Official must document the denial on the form by checking the box identifying the reason for the denial and include the explanation for the denial written in plain language, clearly stating the specific reason(s) for the

denial. The Deciding Official cannot simply state an accommodation is denied because of undue hardship or the accommodation would not be effective without explaining why. Deciding Officials cannot deny an accommodation based on cost. Rather, Deciding Officials must first consider whether resources are available to the Mint as a whole, excluding those designated by statute for a specific purpose that does not include reasonable accommodation.

- (1) Before denying a reasonable accommodation request, the Deciding Official must consult with their supervisor or next level manager in their chain of command and their local EEO Manager/ Specialist or headquarters' DPM.
- (2) The form used to provide the written denial will also inform the individual of the Mint procedures available for reconsideration and appeal of a denial of reasonable accommodation, and provide notice of the right to file an EEO complaint, pursue a Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) appeal, or a grievance under a grievance procedures, as appropriate. (See Attachment A and Attachment B.)
- (3)Determination of undue hardship is made on a case-by-case basis. When determining that providing an accommodation would cause undue hardship to the Mint, the Deciding Official must consult with the local EEO Manager/Specialist, in coordination with Human Capital Division and Office of Chief Counsel, prior to dissemination. Before reaching a determination that the requested accommodation would be an undue hardship, the Deciding Official must explore whether other effective accommodation options could be provided that would not cause undue hardship, as defined in section 5.0. When determining if undue hardship exists, the Mint will follow the requirements set forth in EEOC's Enforcement Guidance: "Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the Act." Americans with Disabilities available https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidancereasonable-accommodation-and-undue-hardship-under-ada
- j. <u>Reconsideration/Appeal Process</u>. If a request for a reasonable accommodation is not granted, the individual may request that the Deciding Official reconsider the decision. The individual may present additional information to support his/her request or may be asked to provide information to assist in making a decision.

- (1) Requests for reconsideration must first be submitted in writing to the Deciding Official within **ten (10) business days** of receiving the reasonable accommodation decision. The Deciding Official will respond to the request in writing within **five (5) business days** of receiving the request.
- (2) If the decision is not reversed, the individual may submit an appeal of the Deciding Official's decision with the next level manager or any other senior official in the Deciding Official's chain of command who was not involved in the original decision. The appeal must be submitted in writing within **ten** (10) business days of receiving the denial of the request for reconsideration. A response to the appeal will be provided in writing within **ten** (10) business days.
- (3) A request for reconsideration or an appeal of the Deciding Official's decision does not extend the time limits for filing an EEO complaint, pursuing MSPB appeal, or filing a grievance. (See section 7.1. below.)
- k. <u>Information Tracking, Evaluation, and Reporting</u>. The local EEO Manager/ Specialists and headquarters' DPM will prepare and submit both quarterly and annual reports to the Headquarters Diversity Management and Civil Rights Office to assist in the evaluation of the reasonable accommodation program. These reports will also serve as the source for the reasonable accommodation narrative discussion included in the annual Management Directive 715 (MD-715) report.

The local EEO Manager/ Specialist and headquarters' DPM will maintain records related to an employee and applicant's request for a reasonable accommodation. The records will be maintained for the duration of the employee's tenure with the Mint and for one year after the submission of the application for employment.

In accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203, the Mint shall collect the following information:

- (a) The specific reasonable accommodation;
- (b) The job (occupational series, grade level, and agency component) sought by the requesting applicant or held by the employee, including whether the accommodation was needed to:

- apply for a job,
- perform the essential functions of a job, or
- enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment;
- (c) Whether the request was granted or denied, including the basis for the denial;
- (d) Identification of the Deciding Official, and;
- (e) The number of days taken to process the request.
- I. Relationship of Procedures to Statutory and Collective Bargaining Claims. The policy, requirements, and procedures described in this document are in addition to and do not limit, modify, or replace statutory and collective bargaining protections for individuals with disabilities, and the remedies they provide for denial of a reasonable accommodation request. The requirements governing statutory and collective bargaining claims, including time limits for filing such claims, remain unchanged.
  - (1) An individual who chooses to pursue the available remedies for denial of reasonable accommodation must comply with the following, as appropriate:
    - (a) EEO Complaint: Contact your local EEO Manager/ Specialist within 45 calendar days from the date of receipt of the Deciding Official's written decision of denial.
    - (b) MSPB Appeal: Initiate an appeal within 30 calendar days of the appealable adverse action as defined in 5 C.F.R. § 1201.3.
    - (c) Grievance under a Collective Bargaining Agreement: File a grievance in accordance with the provisions of the controlling Collective Bargaining Agreement.

## 8. **AUTHORITY:**

- a. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701), as amended.
- b. Executive Order 13164, Requiring Federal Agencies to Establish Procedures to Facilitate the Provision of Reasonable Accommodation (July 26, 2000)
- Treasury Interim Voluntary Modification and Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures, Transmittal Number: CRD – 009 (October 23, 2018)

- d. EEOC Policy Guidance on Executive Order 13164, Establishing Procedures to Facilitate the Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Number 915.003 (October 20, 2000)
- e. EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Number 915.002 (October 17, 2002)
- f. Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 (Public Law 110-325), effective January 1, 2009
- g. 29 CFR Part 1630 and Appendix EEOC Regulations to Implement the Equal Employment Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) published March 25, 2011.

## 9. ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:

- a. EEOC Practical Advice for Drafting and Implementing Reasonable Accommodation Procedures under Executive Order 13164
- b. EEOC Technical Assistance Manual on the Employment Provisions (Title I) of Disabilities Act
- c. Enforcement Guidance: Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

#### 10. **CANCELLATION:**

- a. Mint Directive 1630, "Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility," dated May 2006.
- b. Mint guidance Procedures to Facilitate Provisions of Reasonable Accommodation, dated September 15, 2004.
- c. Mint Directive 3003.05, Interim Procedures Reasonable Accommodations (March 30, 2017).

## 11. **DOCUMENT REVIEW DATE: August 2022**

12. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Diversity Management and Civil Rights Office

#### ATTACHMENT A

#### **UNITED STATES MINT**

# REQUEST FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION SECTION A: (To be completed by employee, applicant, or representative) Employee/Applicant Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number:\_\_\_\_\_ Location:\_\_\_\_\_ Office/Organization:\_\_\_\_\_ Occupational Series and Grade:\_\_\_\_\_ Briefly describe the specific accommodation requested, if known. (Be as specific as possible, e.g., adaptive equipment, reader, interpreter, schedule change.) If the requested accommodation is time sensitive, please explain. Employee/Applicant or representative's signature: SECTION B: (To be completed by the Deciding Official) Accommodation approved as specifically requested \_\_\_\_Accommodation approved but different from original request. Alternative accommodation offered was \_\_\_\_ accepted \_\_\_\_ rejected. Please describe the alternative accommodation provided. Explain why the

original accommodation requested was not provided and why the alternative

accommodation would be effective.

Accommodation denied because (d	check all that apply)
	efinition of an individual with disability as n Act and the Americans with Disabilities
Accommodation is ineffective	
Medical documentation is inad Other Health Care Provider	equate as per Onsite Medical Doctor or
Accommodation would require	removal of essential functions of the job
Accommodation would require standard	e lowering performance or production
Accommodation would cause a	an undue hardship
Other (Please identify):	
In plain language, clearly state the detailed explain specifically why an accommodation hardship):	. ,
Deciding Official's Signature:	Date:

An individual denied accommodation may request reconsideration by submitting a request in writing to the Deciding Official within **ten (10) business days** of receiving the accommodation decision. The individual may present additional information to support his/her request or may be requested to provide information to assist in making a decision. If the decision is not reversed, the individual may appeal in writing to the next level manager or any other senior official in the Deciding Official's chain of command who was not involved in the original decision within **ten (10) business days** of receiving the denial of the request for reconsideration. Request for reconsideration or appeal of the Deciding Official's decision does not extend the time limits for filing an EEO complaint, pursuing MSPB appeal, or grievance procedures.

If you wish to file an EEO complaint, pursue MSPB appeal, or grievance procedures, you must comply with the following, as appropriate:

- EEO Complaint: Contact your local EEO Manager/ Specialist within 45 calendar days from the date of receipt of the Deciding Official's written decision of denial.
- Grievance: File a grievance in accordance with the provisions of the controlling Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- MSPB Appeal: Initiate an appeal within 30 calendar days of an appealable adverse action as defined in 5 C.F.R. § 1201.3.

#### ATTACHMENT B

#### REASONABLE ACCOMOMMODATION RESOURCES

#### 1. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

1-800-669-3362 (Voice) 1-800-800-3302 (TTY) http://www.eeoc.gov

EEOC has published many ADA and Rehabilitation Act-related documents that may assist both individuals requesting accommodations as well as those involved in the decision-making process. The following EEOC documents are available at the eeoc.gov site:

- a. Enforcement Guidance: Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- b. Enforcement Guidance: Pre-employment Disability-Related Questions and Medical Examinations
- c. Enforcement Guidance: Workers' Compensation and the ADA
- d. Enforcement Guidance: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Psychiatric Disabilities
- e. Enforcement Guidance: Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- f. Fact Sheet on the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

EEOC's Technical Assistance Manual on the Employment Provisions (Title I) of the Americans with Disabilities Act is available on the website of the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) at <a href="http://askjan.org">http://askjan.org</a>.

#### 2. Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

1-800-526-7234 (Voice) 1-877-781-9403 (TTY) http://askjan.org

A service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy, JAN provides free, expert and confidential guidance on reasonable accommodations and provides referrals to other organizations that may have particular information about accommodations for persons with different disabilities. Two specific resources on accommodation options available on the website are: A to Z of Accommodations and Disabilities and Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR).

#### 3. ADA National Network

1-800-949-4232 (Voice/TTY) <a href="http://adata.org">http://adata.org</a>

A network of 10 federally funded regional centers located throughout the United States that provide information, training, and technical assistance on the ADA. Each center works with local business, disability, governmental, rehabilitation, and other professional networks to provide current ADA information and assistance. The centers can provide information on reasonable accommodation and make referrals to local sources of expertise in reasonable accommodations.

#### 4. Interpreting Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Contact your local EEO Manager/Specialist or headquarters' Disability Program Manager for assistance in providing Sign Language Interpreting (SLI), Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) and Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) services for United States Mint employees, applicants, guests, and visitors.

#### 5. **RESNA Technical Assistance Project**

(703) 524-6686 (Voice) (703) 524-6639 (TTY) http://www.resna.org

RESNA, the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, can refer individuals to projects in all 50 states and the six territories offering technical assistance on technology-related services for individuals with disabilities. Services may include:

- Information and referral centers to help determine what devices may assist a person with a disability (including access to large data bases containing information on thousands of commercially available assistive technology products);
- Centers where individuals can try out devices and equipment;
- Assistance in obtaining funding for and repairing devices; and
- Equipment exchange and recycling programs.

#### 6. Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP)

(703) 614-8416 Voice (571) 384-5629 (Videophone) http://www.cap.mil

CAP provides free assistive technology and related services to federal employees with disabilities, wounded service members, federal managers, supervisors, and IT professionals.

#### ATTACHMENT C

## REASSIGNMENT AS A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

DATE: (Insert Date)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR (Insert Employee Name)

FROM: (Insert Name/Title of EEO or Disability Program Manager)

SUBJECT: Reassignment as a Reasonable Accommodation

In accordance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the American with Disabilities Act, (October 17, 2002), reassignment as a reasonable accommodation must be considered if it is determined that there are no other effective accommodations that would enable an employee to perform the essential functions of his/her current job, or if all possible accommodations would cause undue hardship. The United States Mint is prepared to explore reassignment to a funded vacant position for which you are qualified with or without a reasonable accommodation as a potential accommodation. Employees do not compete for a vacant position identified for reassignment as a reasonable accommodation; however, employees cannot be promoted as part of the reassignment process. There is no obligation to create a position for the purpose of reassignment.

To assist with starting the vacancy search process, you are asked to provide me with an updated resume or brief description of your current skills and accomplishments. You are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to ensure the greatest consideration for reassignment opportunities. Failure to provide such information may result in the inability to find a position for reassignment.

In order to assist the United States Mint in its efforts to identify a position to which you may be reassigned, we ask that you respond to the following questions. You are advised that if the United States Mint identifies and offers you a position based on the preferences indicated and you decline the position, the United States Mint has no further obligation to attempt to reassign you.

Positions equivalent to your current grade and pay will be considered If no such positions are available, positions at a lower grade will considered. Are you willing to accept a reassignment to a lower grade if no position equivalent to your current grade is available? Yes No If so, to what grade:	
You understand that you will not receive pay retention if you elect to accept a position at a lower grade.	
Are you willing to be reassigned to a different type of position for which you may be qualified? Yes No If so, to what type(s) of positions?	
Are you willing to be reassigned to a position at another Mint or outside of your commuting area? Yes No If so, please identify the location(s) or commuting area(s):	
You understand that the United States Mint will not pay for any relocation costs if you elect to accept a position outside of your commuting area.	
Are you willing to be reassigned to a different bureau within the Department	
of Treasury? Yes No If so, to which bureau(s)?	

The Human Capital Directorate will review and identify all funded vacant positions and positions expected to become vacant within **thirty (30) business days** from the date the vacancy search started for which you may be qualified with or without reasonable accommodation. The Mint vacancy search will be conducted for **thirty (30) business days** based on the preferences identified for the grade(s) and location(s) you are willing to accept.

The Human Capital Directorate makes the decision on whether you are qualified for a vacant position and ensures the position identified is an approved and funded vacant position.

If the Mint vacancy search is completed and no vacant or expected to become vacant equivalent position is identified or only a lower level position is identified, a Treasury-wide vacancy search will be requested by headquarters' Disability Program Manager. Upon that request, the Department of Treasury's Disability Program Manager will conduct a Treasury-wide search for **thirty (30) business days**.

Once a reassignment offer is made, you have **fourteen (14) business days** to accept or decline the offer. You are not required to accept the reassignment offer. However, if you cannot be accommodated in your current position and you reject a reassignment offer, you may not be qualified to remain in the position.

If no suitable vacant position for which you are qualified to perform is found in the Treasury-wide vacancy search, you will be provided written notification of the vacancy search results as quickly as possible, but not later than **ten (10) business days** from the date the notification is received from the Department of Treasury.

I have been notified of the reassignment process and my options. I have indicated my preferences stated above with full understanding of the reassignment process and my options. I also acknowledge receiving a copy of this memorandum.

Employee's Signature	Date