

Universal Design Principles for Accommodations

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities. To ensure that candidates with disabilities do not face barriers with regard to inaccessible design of facilities and software, curriculum, and/or web pages existing on campus, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance office recommends the use of Universal Design. Universal Design principles incorporated into the interview process ensure equal access regarding accessibility considerations.

An applicant may have a learning disability or visual, speech, hearing, and mobility impairments. Rather than designing your interview process for those currently in your department, design it for people with a broad range of characteristics and abilities. Ensure everyone can:

1. Enter the facilities where interviews will take place, as well as maneuver within them
2. Access virtual components of the hiring process
3. Make use of equipment and software provided
4. Utilize resources and materials provided to them

In the event an interview accommodation request is made, respond in a timely manner. Generally, providing at least an initial contact within one to two business days would be considered timely, depending on the interview turnaround time. While the ADA Compliance office will help implement and secure the accommodation, this process is a shared responsibility on campus. The request should be relayed to the ADA Compliance office with all the necessary information (date, time, nature of interview, etc.) from the recruiter or department.

The checklist below provides suggestions that are intended to assist departments in ensuring the interview process is accessible for all candidates (either virtual or in-person) and that departments are being proactive with inclusive practices

VIRTUAL ACCESS CONCERNS

- Candidates may have HireVue interview requests for accommodations which may include having a live virtual interviewer ask questions or receiving questions ahead of the interview. Check with the ADA Office or HR recruiter with these requests
- Confirm that captioning is set up for zoom/video interviews
- Consider proactively offering ASL accommodations
- For live Zoom interviews, check that interview questions are included in the chat function when each question is asked for ease of reference by the candidate

ON-CAMPUS ACCESS CONCERNS

- Check that parking areas, pathways, and entrances to buildings used in the interview process are wheelchair-accessible or otherwise accessible to those with mobility impairments
- Offer applicants information on wheelchair-accessible routes of travel
- To the extent that the applicant will be navigating different rooms within a building, confirm that there are high-contrast, large-print directional signs to and throughout the facility. Confirm braille signage is available in appropriate rooms
- Within the building, check that aisles are kept wide and clear of obstructions
- Confirm that adequate light is available in rooms where interviews are occurring
- Confirm that your department is conducting interviews in buildings that have wheelchair-accessible restrooms with well-marked signs

PLAN FOR ACCOMODATION

- Do pictures in departmental publications and on websites include people with diverse characteristics that accurately reflect the employee and student body?
- Does the department include a statement about its commitment to universal access and procedures for requesting disability-related accommodations in publications? Suggestion for statement:
 - The University of Colorado Boulder is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities. If you are an interview candidate and require accommodations, please contact the ADA Coordinator at adacoordinator@colorado.edu no later than three days before your interview. We will make all reasonable efforts to fulfill requests submitted after the deadline.
- Explain the interview process to applicants ahead of time so that the applicant can identify their potential need for an accommodation in the interview process. Also, if applicable, inform applicants ahead of time if they will be required to take a test to demonstrate their ability to perform actual or simulated tasks, so that the applicant can make an accommodation request.
 - An applicant with a visual impairment may request assistance in completing forms. Applicants who are deaf may request a sign language interpreter, and applicant with cognitive impairments may request specific instructions on portions of the interview process in advance.

TRAIN STAFF

- Ensure staff members know how to respond to requests for disability-related interview accommodations
- Train administrators, hiring authorities and search committee members on how to properly assess candidates who might complete the application, interview, and/or assessments in alternative formats or using different means
 - Concentrate on the job qualifications and not the disability
 - Treat the individual with the same respect you would afford other candidates
 - Hold individuals with disabilities to the same standards as all applicants
 - Ask only job-related questions that are relevant to the functions of the job for which the applicant is applying
 - Adhere to the same disability etiquette standards as used in other interactions with people with disabilities
 - Do not ask questions about a disability (What treatment do you need? What happened to you?)
 - Do not ask about the amount or type of leave the applicant may take to get treatment for a condition
 - Do not proactively ask whether the applicant will need an accommodation to perform the job

- Ensure that your department is aware, both within the application and interviewing process, that the ADA prohibits asking disability-related questions before a job offer is made
 - Do not conduct an employment test unless all employees in the same job category are required to take one. Employment tests must be job related based on the specific qualifications and job duties documented for the position.
 - Do not request a medical examination prior to making a job offer

CONFIRM THAT RESOURCES ARE ACCESSIBLE

- Ensure the departmental website is accessible. Contact the ADA office for assistance with this process
- Are printed publications available in an accessible format on the department's website and in alternate formats such as Braille, large print, and electronic text?
- If the interview process involves the use of digital technology or software by the candidate, ensure that the technology and/or software is accessible. Please connect with your HR Recruiter or call the ADA office.
- Do video materials provided to applicants have captions? Audio descriptions?
 - Suggestion if not:
 - The University of Colorado Boulder is committed to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities. If you require captioning to view our video content, please contact (*the contact you've identified*). We will make all reasonable efforts to provide a captioned video within 24 hours of your request.
- For in-person test taking, is there an adjustable-height table available for use by an applicant?
- For in-person test taking or presentations/interviews, is there screen enlargement software available for users with low vision? Is a large monitor available so that a larger amount of screen can be viewed while magnified?
- Ensure all testing materials are in an accessible format. If they have not been reviewed for accessibility or have known issues, ensure that an equally effective alternate access plan is in place while remediation is in progress. This could include providing testing materials in alternative formats or making other adjustments to tests as an accommodation because the format and way a test is given may pose problems for persons with impaired sensory, speaking, or manual skills, as well as for those with certain learning disabilities.

For consultation, guidance and training on any of the strategies listed in this resource, contact the Office of ADA Compliance at 303-492-9725 or email at adacoordinator@colorado.edu