

Workplace Accommodations

Number:	1.3.2
Responsible Executive:	President
Approval Authority:	Senior Leadership Team
Effective Date:	October 17, 2025
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Revised Date:	
Category:	Administration

PURPOSE

This policy outlines Coquitlam College's (the College) commitment to providing a respectful, inclusive, equitable, and accessible work environment through the provision of reasonable accommodations for employees.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals employed by the College, including permanent, temporary, casual, contract and student workers. It applies to any location and College property where an employee is reasonably performing work for the College.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The College recognizes its obligations under the *BC Human Rights Code* and the *Accessible BC Act* to accommodate employees with disabilities or other protected characteristics to the point of undue hardship.
2. The College will take all reasonable steps to accommodate employees, up to the point of undue hardship.
3. Each accommodation request will be assessed individually and in a timely manner.
4. Medical accommodations will be considered based on documentation from a licensed health care practitioner confirming the existence of a disability and the need for accommodation. Non-medical accommodation requests related to other protected characteristics under the *BC Human Rights Code* will also be considered. Supporting documentation may be requested.
5. Where possible, the College will explore accommodations that allow the employee to remain in their current role with no reduction in salary. If reassignment is necessary, the employee will receive the compensation associated with the new position.
6. Accommodation requests may be denied if:
 - a. They are not based on a disability or protected ground;
 - b. Supporting evidence is insufficient or incomplete;
 - c. The employee does not engage in the process in good faith or refuses a reasonable accommodation offer;
 - d. The accommodation would cause undue hardship.
7. The duty to accommodate does not extend to:
 - a. Creating new positions;

- b. Displacing other employees;
 - c. Creating work of little or no value;
 - d. Placing employees in roles for which they are unqualified; or
 - e. Fulfilling requests that could cause undue hardship.
- 8. The College and all parties involved will respect employee privacy and handle sensitive information in accordance with applicable legislation and internal policies.
- 9. All equipment or materials provided as part of an accommodation remain the property of the College.
- 10. A successful accommodation process depends on mutual collaboration and good faith from both the College and the employee.

PROCEDURES

- 11. Employees seeking a workplace accommodation should contact the Human Resources (HR) Coordinator directly, either by email or in consultation with their supervisor. When submitting a request, employees should include the following information to help facilitate the accommodation process:
 - a. A brief description of the accommodation being requested;
 - b. The reason the accommodation is needed (e.g., related to a disability, medical condition, or protected ground under the BC Human Rights Code);
 - c. Any relevant supporting documentation (if available); and
 - d. Preferred methods or timelines for communication, if applicable.
- 12. Employees are encouraged to reach out to the HR Coordinator with any questions or to discuss their needs before making a formal request. All inquiries and requests will be handled in a confidential, respectful, and timely manner.
- 13. The HR Coordinator will initiate the accommodation process and will:
 - a. Gather relevant information to understand the type of accommodation required.
 - b. Work with the employee's Supervisor to explore all reasonable and effective accommodation options.
- 14. The HR Coordinator will present a recommendation to the Senior Leadership Team for approval. If the accommodation is requested by a member of Senior Leadership Team, they will recuse themselves from the discussion.
- 15. The HR Coordinator will implement the decision of Senior Leadership Team and will respond to requests to modify an existing accommodation.
- 16. Employees are responsible for:
 - a. Participating in the accommodation process in good faith; and
 - b. Informing the HR Coordinator or their Supervisor if an accommodation requires adjustment or is not effective.
- 17. The HR Coordinator will maintain confidential records of all accommodations.

Appeals

18. Employees who believe a decision regarding their accommodation request was unfair or failed to consider relevant information may submit a written appeal to the President within 10 business days of receiving the decision. The appeal must clearly state the grounds for reconsideration and include any supporting documentation.
19. The President will review the appeal, consult with relevant parties as needed, and determine the outcome.
20. A written decision will be provided within a reasonable timeframe. The President's decision is final.

DEFINITIONS

Accommodation: Any change to the work environment, or to the ways tasks are customarily done, that allows an employee to perform the essential duties of their job. Accommodations may include:

- a. Workstation modifications;
- b. Adjusted hours or workdays;
- c. Modified policies or practices;
- d. Assistive technologies;
- e. Reassignment to a vacant position; or
- f. Partial job redesign.

College campuses and properties: All spaces owned, leased, or operated by the College.

Employee: An individual who is employed by the College on a full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary or contract basis.

Persons with Disabilities: Individuals with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in the workplace on an equal basis.

Protected Characteristics: As defined by the *BC Human Rights Code*, including: Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and age.

Reasonable Accommodation: An adjustment to the workplace or work practices that enables an employee to perform the essential duties of their job, without imposing undue hardship on the employer.

Undue hardship: The point at which accommodating an employee would cause significant difficulty or expense for the employer. Factors considered include:

- a. Health and safety risks;
- b. Excessive financial costs;
- c. Lowered service standards;
- d. Inability to meet essential job functions;
- e. Workplace disruption;
- f. Significant adverse impact on others.

RELATED RESOURCES

- [*Accessible British Columbia Act*, SBC 2021, c 19](#)
- [*Human Rights Code*, RSBC 1996, c 210](#)
- [*Personal Information Protection Act*, SBC 2003, c 63](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy 1.4.1](#)
- [Employee Professional Standards and Conflict of Interest Policy 3.1.2](#)
- [Prevention of Bullying and Harassment 3.1.4](#)