

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
TDHCA Governing Board Approved Draft of
§1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department

Disclaimer

Attached is a draft of proposed 10 TAC Chapter 1, Administration, Subchapter A, General Policies and Procedures, §1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department, that was approved by the TDHCA Governing Board on February 10, 2022. This action entails the repeal and replacement of the current rule. This document, including its preamble, is expected to be published in the February 25, 2022, edition of the *Texas Register* and that published version will constitute the official version for purposes of public comment and can be found at the following link: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/texreg/index.shtml>.

Public Comment

Public Comment Period: Start: 8:00 a.m. Austin local time on February 25, 2022
End: 5:00 p.m. Austin local time on March 25, 2022

Comments received after 5:00 p.m. Austin local time on March 25, 2022, will not be accepted.

Written comments may be submitted, in hard copy or electronic formats within the designated public comment period to:

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Attn: Brooke Boston
Rules Comments
P.O. Box 13941
Austin, Texas 78711-3941
Email: brooke.boston@tdhca.state.tx.us

Those making public comment are encouraged to reference the specific draft rule, policy, or plan related to their comment as well as a specific reference or cite associated with each comment.

Please be aware that all comments submitted to the TDHCA will be considered public information.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Attachment 1: Preamble, including required analysis, for proposed repeal of 10 TAC Chapter 1, Administration, Subchapter A, General Policies and Procedures, §1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (the Department) proposes the repeal of 10 TAC Chapter 1, Administration, Subchapter A, General Policies and Procedures, §1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department. The purpose of the proposed repeal is to eliminate the current rule while replacing it with a more current version of the rule.

Tex. Gov't Code §2001.0045(b) does not apply to the rule proposed for action because it was determined that no costs are associated with this action, and therefore no costs warrant being offset.

The Department has analyzed this proposed rulemaking and the analysis is described below for each category of analysis performed.

a. GOVERNMENT GROWTH IMPACT STATEMENT REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.0221.

Mr. Bobby Wilkinson, Executive Director, has determined that, for the first five years the repeal would be in effect:

1. The repeal does not create or eliminate a government program but relates to the handling of requests for reasonable accommodations.
2. The repeal does not require a change in work that would require the creation of new employee positions, nor are the rule changes significant enough to reduce work load to a degree that eliminates any existing employee positions.
3. The repeal does not require additional future legislative appropriations.
4. The repeal will not result in an increase in fees paid to the Department, nor in a decrease in fees paid to the Department.
5. The repeal is not creating a new regulation, except that it is being replaced by a new rule simultaneously to provide for revisions.
6. The repeal will not expand or contract the applicability of an existing regulation.
7. The repeal will not increase or decrease the number of individuals subject to the rule's applicability.
8. The repeal will not negatively or positively affect the state's economy.

b. ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL OR MICRO-BUSINESSES OR RURAL COMMUNITIES AND REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2006.002.

The Department has evaluated the repeal and determined that the repeal will not create an economic effect on small or micro-businesses or rural communities.

c. TAKINGS IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2007.043. The repeal does not contemplate or authorize a taking by the Department; therefore, no Takings Impact Assessment is required.

d. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT IMPACT STATEMENTS REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.024(a)(6).

The Department has evaluated the repeal as to its possible effects on local economies and has determined that for the first five years the repeal would be in effect there would be no economic effect on local employment; therefore, no local employment impact statement is required to be prepared for the rule.

e. PUBLIC BENEFIT/COST NOTE REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.024(a)(5). Mr. Wilkinson has determined that, for each year of the first five years the repeal is in effect, the public benefit anticipated as a result of the repealed and new sections would be an updated and more germane rule. There will not be economic costs to individuals required to comply with the repealed section.

f. FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.024(a)(4). Mr. Wilkinson also has determined that for each year of the first five years the repeal is in effect, enforcing or administering the repeal does not have any foreseeable implications related to costs or revenues of the state or local governments.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT. The public comment period will be held February 25, 2022, to March 25, 2022, to receive input on the proposed action. Written comments may be submitted to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Attn: Brooke Boston, Rule Comments, P.O. Box 13941, Austin, Texas 78711-3941 or by email to bboston@tdhca.state.tx.us. ALL COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 p.m., Austin local time, March 25, 2022.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The proposed repeal is made pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §2306.053, which authorizes the Department to adopt rules. Except as described herein the proposed action affects no other code, article, or statute.

§1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department

Attachment 2: Preamble, including required analysis, for proposed new 10 TAC Chapter 1, Administration, Subchapter A, General Policies and Procedures, §1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (the Department) proposes new 10 TAC Chapter 1, Administration, Subchapter A, General Policies and Procedures, §1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department. The purpose of the proposed rule is to: update definitions including bringing several definition into concurrence with definitions in other Department rules, include phone number and email as requested contact information, clarify the process to be used in the handling of Reasonable Accommodations by staff, allow staff to grant approvals of Reasonable Accommodation requests, and make other minor non-substantive revisions.

Tex. Gov't Code §2001.0045(b) does not apply to the rule proposed for action because it was determined that no costs are associated with this action, and therefore no costs warrant being offset.

The Department has analyzed this proposed rulemaking and the analysis is described below for each category of analysis performed.

a. GOVERNMENT GROWTH IMPACT STATEMENT REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.0221.

Mr. Bobby Wilkinson has determined that, for the first five years the new section would be in effect:

1. The new section does not create or eliminate a government program but relates to the handling of requests for reasonable accommodations.
2. The new section does not require a change in work that would require the creation of new employee positions, nor are the rule changes significant enough to reduce work load to a degree that eliminates any existing employee positions.
3. The new section does not require additional future legislative appropriations.
4. The new section will not result in an increase in fees paid to the Department, nor in a decrease in fees paid to the Department.
5. The new section does not create a new regulation, except that it is replacing a section being repealed simultaneously to provide for revisions.
6. The new section will not expand nor contract an existing regulation.
7. The new section will not increase or decrease the number of individuals subject to the rule's applicability.
8. The new section will not negatively or positively affect the state's economy.

b. ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL OR MICRO-BUSINESSES OR RURAL COMMUNITIES AND REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2006.002.

The Department has evaluated the new section and determined that the action will not create an economic effect on small or micro-businesses or rural communities.

c. TAKINGS IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2007.043. The new section does not contemplate or authorize a taking by the Department; therefore, no Takings Impact Assessment is required.

d. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT IMPACT STATEMENTS REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.024(a)(6).

The Department has evaluated the new section as to its possible effect on local economies and has determined that for the first five years the new section would be in effect there would be no economic effect on local employment; therefore, no local employment impact statement is required to be prepared for the rule.

e. PUBLIC BENEFIT/COST NOTE REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.024(a)(5). Mr. Wilkinson has determined that, for each year of the first five years the new section is in effect, the public benefit anticipated as a result of the new section would be an updated and more germane rule. There will not be economic costs to individuals required to comply with the new section.

f. FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED BY TEX. GOV'T CODE §2001.024(a)(4). Mr. Wilkinson also has determined that for each year of the first five years the new section are in effect, enforcing or administering the rule does not have any foreseeable implications related to costs or revenues of the state or local governments.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT. The public comment period will be held February 25, 2022, to March 25, 2022, to receive input on the proposed action. Written comments may be submitted to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Attn: Brooke Boston, Rule Comments, P.O. Box 13941, Austin, Texas 78711-3941 or by email to bboston@tdhca.state.tx.us. ALL COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 p.m., Austin local time, March 25, 2022.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The proposed new section is made pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §2306.053, which authorizes the Department to adopt rules. Except as described herein the proposed new section affects no other code, article, or statute.

§1.1 Reasonable Accommodation Requests to the Department

(a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish the procedures by which a Requestor may ask that a Reasonable Accommodation is made to the Department. For rules governing the handling of reasonable accommodation requests and responsibilities of entities receiving funds or resources from the Department see Subchapter B, §1.204 of this Chapter, relating to Reasonable Accommodations. This rule is statutorily authorized by Tex. Gov't Code, 2306.066(e), which requires the Executive Director to prepare a written plan to provide persons with disabilities an opportunity to participate in the Department's programs, and in accordance with the Fair Housing Act, and other federal and state civil rights laws.

(b) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this section, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) Board--~~The Governing Board of the~~ Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Governing Board.

(2) ~~Program Division~~ Manager or Director--Department staff member supervising the division or area of a division containing the program for which a Reasonable Accommodation is being requested.

(3) Disability--A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or having a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment. Included in this meaning is the term handicap as defined in the Fair Housing Act, or the term disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act. or as defined by other applicable federal or state law.

(4) Fair Housing Act--Fair Housing Act of 1968, also known as Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

(5) Reasonable Accommodation--An accommodation and/or modification that is an alteration, change, exception, or adjustment to a program, policy, service, building, or dwelling unit, that will allow a qualified person with a Disability to:

- (A) Participate fully in a program;
- (B) Take advantage of a service;
- (C) Live in a dwelling; or
- (D) Use and enjoy a dwelling.

(6) Requestor--Includes applicants, members of the public, clients of Department programs, ~~and~~ program participants, or their representatives.

(7) Section 504--Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

(c) Procedures.

(1) The Requestor of the Reasonable Accommodation shall submit a request to the Division Manager or Director or their designee. A request does not have to be in writing. A request can be made in a face-to-face conversation with a Division Manager or Director or their designee, or using any other method of communication. A request is any communication in which an individual clearly asks or states that they need the Department to provide or to change something because of a Disability.

(2) The request, whether oral or written, must contain, at minimum:

- (A) The Department program or procedure for which an accommodation is being requested;
- (B) Household information to include name, ~~and~~ address, phone number and email address, if available;
- (C) Description of the Reasonable Accommodation being requested; and
- (D) Reason the Reasonable Accommodation is necessary.

(E) In the case of oral requests, the Division Manager or Director will create a written summary of the request.

(3) The Division Director ~~may~~will coordinate with the Department's Fair Housing subject matter experts as needed. ~~Manager and~~The supervising Director, if any, and may ask for additional information from the Requestor. Staff should address Reasonable Accommodations requests promptly. If making the requested~~such a~~ Reasonable Accommodation would ~~involve~~ require the Department to incur an expense, ~~the Division Director staff should~~ will first confirm that ~~consult with their Division Manager or Director to ensure that they~~ the Reasonable Accommodation expense will not cause the Division to exceed ~~remain within~~ their approved budget or, if additional measures beyond those within budget are required, that they are promptly considered and a compliant decision made. Upon having the applicable information, the Division Director or Manager and Fair Housing subject matter experts, as needed, ~~Manager~~ will determine:

(A) If the proposed Reasonable Accommodation is covered under Section 504 and/or the Fair Housing Act, or any other federal or state law; and

(B) Whether to approve the request, or recommend to the Executive Director ~~approval,~~ an alternative Reasonable Accommodation, or denial. Any approval that would require Board action will first be presented to the Executive Director.

(4) If not approved as requested or if the approval requires Board action, ~~The~~ request and recommendation, ~~are~~will then be sent to the Executive Director or their designee, resulting in one of the following steps:

~~(A) The Executive Director determines Board action is not necessary and approves the request;~~

~~(A)~~ (B) The Executive Director proposes an alternative Reasonable Accommodation to the Requestor;

~~(B)~~ (C) The Executive Director concur ~~determines~~ Board action is necessary and presents the request and recommendation ~~any proposed alternative Reasonable Accommodation~~ at an ensuing Board meeting. The Executive Director can choose to include a recommendation for or against the request; or

~~(D) The Executive Director refers the request to the Department's Dispute Resolution Coordinator for an Alternative Dispute Resolution procedure as outlined in 10 TAC §1.17; or~~

(E) The Executive Director denies the request. In the case of a denial, the Requestor can ask that their request be placed on the agenda for the next available Board meeting for a final Board determination.