

# REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

Ensuring our services are accessible to everyone

May 2026



Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

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## Policy statement

The [Equality Act 2010](#) (the Act) requires Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) to consider requests for reasonable adjustments to how we deliver services for people with disabilities (as defined in the Act).

The duty is to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ if the way that we carry out our functions places a disabled person at a “substantial disadvantage” compared to someone who does not have a disability.

## Scope

This policy applies to all service users who engage with HIE and who may require reasonable adjustments to access our services, information, or facilities. It covers every stage of an individual’s interaction with HIE, including but not limited to:

- accessing information about our programmes, funding, and support services;
- communicating with our staff by phone, email, online platforms, or in person;
- participating in meetings, events, workshops, or consultations organised or supported by us;
- applying for, receiving, or managing support, funding, or other services;
- providing services to HIE, e.g. as a supplier or tenderer, and
- accessing our premises, public-facing facilities, or digital services.

The policy applies to all HIE staff involved in delivering services to the public. It also applies to contractors, partners, and third-party organisations acting on behalf of HIE when providing services to, or interacting with, service users.

This policy does not cover reasonable adjustments for HIE employees or job applicants. These are managed through our [HR policies relating to equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace](#).

## Context

We are committed to ensuring that everyone can access and benefit from our services, regardless of disability. Our responsibilities are shaped by the Equality Act 2010, which places a legal duty on public bodies to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people. This includes making changes to the way we communicate, deliver services, provide information, or manage physical environments.

The Act also places additional obligations on public sector organisations through the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Under the PSED, HIE must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with and without protected characteristics. Making reasonable adjustments is central to meeting these duties.

This policy forms part of HIE's wider approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. It should be read alongside:

- [HIE's accessibility statement](#)
- [Customer service charter](#)
- [Complaints handling procedure](#)
- [Data protection and privacy policies](#)

## Definitions

Within this policy and associated guidance, the following terms and their meanings are defined as:

### Disability:

Under the Act 'people who are disabled' means people who have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### Reasonable adjustments:

Reasonable adjustments are changes we make to our usual ways of working to ensure that service users with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in accessing or benefiting from HIE services. Adjustments may relate to:

- physical access to premises or events;
- policies and procedures, e.g., communication methods and information formats;
- auxiliary aids or support, such as interpreters or assistive technology; or
- alternative ways to submit an application if the online system is not accessible.

Whether an adjustment is 'reasonable' depends on individual circumstances and what is effective, practical, affordable, and legally permitted.

## Requesting reasonable adjustments

If you have a disability as defined by the Act above, you can request a reasonable adjustment at any time during your interaction with HIE and our services. We recommend that you make a request as soon as practically possible as it means more options may be available for making adjustments.

Your request can be made through the following channels:

Telephone: 01463 245 245 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)

Email: [customer.service@hient.co.uk](mailto:customer.service@hient.co.uk)

In writing or in person to any member of HIE staff, via [any HIE office](#)

## Acknowledging your request

We will acknowledge receipt of a request promptly, normally within two working days. The acknowledgement will confirm:

- who is handling the request;
- whether additional information is needed, and
- the expected timescale for a decision.

Where the request is made verbally, staff will ensure that the details are accurately recorded and confirmed with you in your preferred format.

## Considering the request

HIE is only required to make adjustments that are considered 'reasonable'. Factors to consider include:

- what the disadvantage would be if the adjustment were not made;
- whether the adjustment will be effective in reducing the disadvantage;
- how practical it is to make it;
- would it disrupt our other activities unreasonably, or result in significant disadvantage to others;
- the cost and availability of resources, including external help and finance;
- whether we have power to make the requested adjustment, and
- whether we are required by law to take a certain course of action.

We will discuss with you where we require further information to consider your request.

## Decision and communication

We will provide the outcome of the request in writing or in your preferred format. The response will include:

- the adjustment agreed (or the reasons why an adjustment cannot be made);
- any alternative adjustments offered;
- expected timescale for adjustment to be made; and
- who to contact if circumstances change or if further support is needed.

If HIE is unable to provide a requested adjustment, we will give a clear explanation and offer an opportunity to discuss alternatives.

Reasonable adjustments that are applicable on an ongoing basis will be regularly reviewed with each individual to ensure they remain effective and appropriate as needs or circumstances change.

HIE is responsible for paying for all reasonable adjustments and cannot pass the cost to the service user making the request.

Legal exceptions may apply where HIE does not have the power to make a reasonable adjustment, or where a statute requires a certain course of action.

As per our [customer service charter](#), all requests will be treated with fairness and discretion. Requests will be dealt with as soon as possible, acknowledged within two days and responded within 10 days.

## Complaints about handling requests for reasonable adjustments

If you are unhappy with our handling of your request or the adjustment provided, you can raise a concern through [HIE's complaints handling procedure](#).

## Further information

If you require further guidance on this policy, or need help understanding how to request or access reasonable adjustments, please contact HIE's customer service team:

Email: [customer.service@hient.co.uk](mailto:customer.service@hient.co.uk)

Telephone: 01463 245 245 (Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm)

You can also request this policy, or any related information, in an alternative format such as large print, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or a format compatible with assistive technology. Please let us know your preferred format when you get in touch.