

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY FOR PUBLIC AGENCY BROWN ACT MEETINGS**

Effective January 1, 2023, Government Code Section 54953(g) requires that all public agencies have and implement a procedure for receiving and swiftly resolving reasonable accommodation requests for individuals with disabilities, consistent with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132), and resolving any doubt in favor of accessibility. Requests may be made by any individual that participates or conducts the meeting, such as members of the public, staff, and members of the legislative body.

### **Readily Available Accommodations**

Any of the following accommodations can be provided for a publicly-noticed public agency meeting or meetings open to the public:

- For individuals with hearing loss: assistive listening devices; assistive listening systems;
- For individuals with mobility impairments: ADA accessible facilities, including ramps and elevators, to access council chambers; closed circuit broadcast/Zoom/telephone access.

### **Additional Accommodations (Upon Request)**

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, who are blind or have low vision, have mobility impairments, or have any other disability, may also request accommodations other than those readily available using the process outlined below. Accommodations should be requested as early as possible as additional time may be required in order to provide the requested accommodation. Note that an accommodation will be considered to be unreasonable and will not be provided if it imposes undue financial or administrative burdens on the public agency, or requires a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program. If a particular accommodation is unreasonable, the public agency will offer an alternative accommodation that is reasonable.

#### Process to request an additional accommodation:

1. If you would like an additional accommodation that is not identified above, please request an accommodation as soon as you can, preferably before the meeting you wish to attend, or at the meeting itself if necessary. The sooner the request is made, the more likely it is that the public agency can provide the accommodation or an alternative. You can make this request yourself, or someone can make it on your behalf with your permission.

2. Your request can be made orally or in writing, and you should submit it to the public agency's administrative offices or to the City Manager/CEO/Executive Director so as to avoid delay in reviewing and processing the request. Requests can be made at either the following email address or mailing address:

3. Your request for an accommodation must provide the following information:

- (a) *What accommodation?* We need to know the type of accommodation you are seeking, and/or how the accommodation will allow you to access and participate in the meeting. You are not required to disclose the particular disability, instead a general statement of explanation will suffice. You may, but are not required to, submit a letter from a physician to the effect that the requested accommodation is required for you to access and participate in the meeting.
- (b) *Contact information.* You must give staff current contact information so they can respond in a timely manner. This can be a mailing address, an email address, or telephone number, for example. Note that if only a mailing address is provided, you need to make the request early enough that a mailed response can be timely provided.
- (c) *Which meeting or meetings?* Please specify if the accommodation is requested for a specific meeting, or for all or a series of meetings before a particular body.

Procedures for Public Agency Staff:

A. Any staff member who receives, or believes they may have received, an accommodation request, will promptly relay the request and the requestor's contact information to the City/Agency Clerk, City Manager/Executive Director, or City Attorney/Agency Counsel.

B. The City Attorney/Agency Counsel may be requested to assist in the review of requests, and assist staff in providing a response to the requestor as soon as practicable.

C. All reasonable accommodation request responses shall be provided in writing, when such written response can be transmitted in a timely manner prior to the start of the specific meeting. Otherwise, the response will be provided orally. Responses will identify whether the accommodation is granted or granted in the alternative, and any instructions necessary to access the accommodation. If denied the response will identify the grounds for denial. Public agency staff will document requests and responses provided orally.

D. The law requires that all doubt be resolved in favor of accommodations. Staff will make reasonable efforts to communicate with requestors to obtain clarifications or to discuss whether alternative accommodations will be viable.