

Special Housing Accommodation Process

Frequently Asked Questions

Please contact Meg Hegener, Coordinator of Student Access Services for application at mhegener@skidmore.edu.

What is the purpose of granting accommodations?

The purpose of granting accommodations (housing or academic) is to ensure that a student has equal access to our college community and that barriers that prevent that access are removed. Establishing a relationship between a disability and the request for accommodation is what we base the barrier/access question and solution on—it is the basis for determining a reasonable accommodation. Without it we would open the door to every student who thinks they would benefit from, or who has a preference for, a single room or apartment.

What do I do if I need special housing accommodations?

Students who believe they require special housing accommodations must apply through the Coordinator of Student Access Services. You will need to submit a completed application from the student as well as supporting information from a non-parental treatment provider (i.e. counselor, therapist, physician, etc.) is required.

What does an application for Special Housing Accommodations include?

Students are required to complete and submit a two-part form. The first part is to be completed by the student. The second form is for the non-parental treatment provider to complete. The student is encouraged to submit this form to their treatment provider as soon as possible. Please contact Meg Hegener at mhegener@skidmore.edu for a form.

It is the student's responsibility to answer all questions fully and honestly, and that all parts of the form are completed, including signing and dating the first page. Students are encouraged to include anything and everything that will give the review committee a clear and complete picture of the nature of the request.

Who will review my information?

The Special Housing Accommodations Committee includes representatives from the following areas: Residential Life, Counseling Center, Health Services, Student Academic Services, and (as needed) Dining Services. The committee reads and discusses each request and then makes a recommendation based on the information the treatment provider and the student have submitted.

When the committee convenes, the following factors are considered:

- Severity of condition
- Timing of request
- Feasibility of request
- Availability of housing options.

I have already notified the Coordinator of Student Access Services, Office of Academic Advising, Health Services, Counseling Center, Dining Services, etc. about my circumstances. Why doesn't Residential Life know to contact me about my housing needs?

The reason is confidentiality. Health Services and Counseling Center are ethically and legally bound by the nature of their profession and are not able to communicate any information relating to patient/physician; patient/clinician matters. Even if the student is a patient/client at Health Services or the Counseling Center, representatives from their respective areas will not comment on any student's interaction with their departments. Their representation on the committee is to share general information about specific illness, disorders, course of treatment, etc. They will not and cannot comment on specific students. Please be sure your application reflects the details the committee needs to make a decision.

Other offices such as Residential Life, Office of Academic Advising, etc., embrace the spirit of confidentiality and therefore do not share information (such as accommodations) between us. It is very likely that students receive accommodations in the classroom, but do not require them in the residence halls. There is an expectation the student will consult with appropriate departments as necessary.

Why does my non-parental treatment provider (i.e. counselor, therapist, physician, etc.) need to complete a form? Isn't a letter enough?

In order to be consistent and fair to all students, we require the College's forms to be completed. It also gives our committee members a complete picture of what the non-parental treatment provider has diagnosed and requests. Many times a letter does not delve fully into the rationale of the request.

What do I do if this committee recommends an accommodation be granted?

If the recommendation is to grant an accommodation, the Coordinator of Student Access Services will contact the student directly via Skidmore email.

What do I do if the committee does not recommend an accommodation?

If the recommendation is not in support of a request, the student will receive housing through housing assignment process for first year students. Please note that requests that are not granted through this process by no means implies that an existing condition is not valid; it simply means that the consensus is that a housing accommodation will not make an existing condition any better or worse.

How do I appeal the committee's decision?

Any student wishing to appeal the recommendation of the committee must do so within the timeline outlined in the decision letter. The appeal process must include a new student letter as well as additional, supporting information from the treatment provider.

All information should be submitted to the Coordinator of Students Access Services. All appellate decisions are final.