



## How to help someone get an accommodation for their disability in the Connecticut Judicial Branch

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the 1990 law designed to remove barriers to everyday life for people with disabilities. Under Title II of the Act, the Connecticut Judicial Branch will make reasonable modifications to our programs, facilities, and services to qualified individuals, **at no cost**, to ensure access to justice.

**How does a person make a request for accommodation?** A request can be made in many different ways. You can fill out the Request for Accommodation By Persons With Disabilities form that is on the Judicial Branch website at <https://jud.ct.gov/webforms/forms/ES264.pdf>, or you may call or email the contact person at the facility you will be visiting. This trained Contact person can assist you by answering specific questions about access to services and by processing requests for accommodations. They can even complete the form for you, and offer suggestions if an accommodation cannot be granted. ADA Contact people and their email addresses and phone numbers are listed by the town the facility is in and can be found on the Judicial Branch website, here: <https://jud.ct.gov/ADA/towns.htm>. **Please try to make your request at least 10 days in advance!**

**Why wouldn't my request be approved?** The ADA requires the Judicial Branch to provide reasonable accommodations, but does not require it to provide requests for personal services like the assistance of a lawyer to help a person understand court proceedings. The Branch is not required to do anything that would cause a "fundamental alteration" to its services or processes, such as holding a hearing at night or removing security from a courtroom.

**If the Judicial Branch won't give me the accommodation I want, how can they help me?** Many times the Judicial Branch can come up with an alternative accommodation for a qualified individual with a disability. For instance, a person with a hidden disability might ask for a lawyer to be appointed so that they don't have to go to court alone. The Judicial Branch cannot provide a lawyer, but can allow a friend to accompany a person to provide moral support in a proceeding, even in confidential proceedings, subject to our Guidelines for Use of a Support Person, [https://jud.ct.gov/ADA/FINAL\\_%20Support%20Person%20Guidelines.pdf](https://jud.ct.gov/ADA/FINAL_%20Support%20Person%20Guidelines.pdf). The Judicial Branch also has on its website a list of other resources, such as legal aid, housing and equipment resources, transportation, and service providers, here: <https://jud.ct.gov/ADA/resources.htm>.

**My request was denied. I disagree, and I want to complain about it. How do I do that?** For additional information on how to file a grievance or complaint pertaining to a matter in the Superior Court, please see our Grievance/Complaint Procedure here, [https://jud.ct.gov/ada/Grievance\\_Proc\\_SuperiorCourt.pdf](https://jud.ct.gov/ada/Grievance_Proc_SuperiorCourt.pdf) and use our Grievance/Complaint form, <https://jud.ct.gov/webforms/forms/es263.pdf>. Information on filing a grievance about an ADA decision at the Supreme or Appellate Court can be found at <https://jud.ct.gov/webforms/forms/es263.pdf> and the form can be found here: <https://jud.ct.gov/webforms/forms/es280.pdf>.

**I don't like the decision in my case. I think it was because I have a disability. Can I file an ADA complaint?** The ADA Complaint process is used only when a request for accommodation has been denied. It is not the correct way to challenge a Judge's decision.

**I have a service dog. Can I bring him with me to the courthouse?** The Judicial Branch allows service dogs in its facilities. You will be asked two questions when trying to enter a facility with a service dog: *Is that a dog for a disability?* And, *What is the work or task that the dog performs?* You must maintain control of your service dog while in the facility. If a dog becomes unruly or out of control, you will be asked to remove the dog from the facility, although you may continue your business once the dog has been removed. For more information, see the guidelines on service animals from the U.S. Department of Justice, here: [https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service\\_animal\\_ga.html](https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_ga.html).

Some services and auxiliary aids the Judicial Branch can provide to people with disabilities, at no cost:

- American Sign Language
- Certified RealTime Transcription (CART)
- Portable PocketTalkers, to amplify sound
- FM Kits that provide clear sound with less background noise
- Materials in Braille
- Remediated forms for use with computer Reader programs
- Audio recordings of many proceedings
- Magnifying glass

The Judicial Branch can provide many different auxiliary aids and services to people with disabilities but under the ADA it does *not* have to provide other services like:

- Transportation to court
- Personal hearing aids
- Wheelchairs, walkers, canes, scooters, or other personal mobility equipment
- Reading glasses (*but magnifying glasses are available to borrow in Clerk's offices*)
- Personal assistance in writing briefs, responses, or other court-related correspondence
- Legal help including lawyers and paralegal assistance

### How do I get an accommodation?

Find your local ADA Contact person by going to the web site here

<https://jud.ct.gov/ADA/towns.htm> and look up the name of the town where you have to go to court or a judicial facility. There, you'll find the name, phone number and email address of the Contact person. They can help you with the process of requesting an accommodation for your disability, and even complete the form for you. You may also call the Centralized ADA Office at **860-706-5310**.

My friend has a court appearance and I want to go with them. I am hard of hearing. Do I have to have a case to get an accommodation?

No, you do not need to be a party to a case. The Branch will provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified individuals with a disability. **Please try to make your request at least 10 days in advance**, by contacting your local ADA Contact person. The list is online here:

<https://jud.ct.gov/ADA/towns.htm>

I have a dog that keeps me company and helps me from being nervous. Can I bring her to court?

The Judicial Branch allows service dogs into its facilities. You will be asked 2 questions before entry: *Is that a dog for a disability? What is the work or task the dog performs?*

If you have an emotional support dog whose presence keeps you calm, it is not considered a working service animal and will not be allowed into our facilities. If your dog performs a task or job that helps your disability, it will be. Your dog must be under your control, non-aggressive, and toilet trained. If a dog becomes aggressive, barks, or is out of control or toileting in the facility, you will be asked to remove the animal. For more information, visit the DOJ website:

[https://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)

I have been called for Jury service, and I need a wheelchair because I can't walk long distances. Will the Judicial Branch provide a wheelchair and someone to assist me?

Wheelchairs, hearing aids, walkers and certain other assistance aids are considered items of a personal nature, and are **not** provided by the Judicial Branch. If you have been summoned for Jury Service, and would like an accommodation, you can complete a request at

<https://www.jud2.ct.gov/juryforms/JA030Disability.aspx>

If you have a disability that would prevent you from serving as a Juror, you and your medical provider can complete a Medical Disqualification Form, <https://www.jud.ct.gov/webforms/forms/JA047.pdf>

or call 1-800-842-8175.