



Nicholls State University

## Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

### I. POLICY

**Nicholls State University** is fully committed to ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, its Amending Act of 2008 (collectively ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability to include:

- Title I: Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all employment practices, including recruitment, hiring, advancement, compensation, fringe benefits, job training and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. Prohibits discrimination against qualified students equal access to education, housing and facilities as they peruse higher education. Upon request, **Nicholls State University** shall engage in an interactive process and may approve a reasonable accommodation, unless the Requestor is not a qualified individual; doing so poses an undue hardship to the agency; or poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual with a disability or others.
- Title II: Ensures qualified individuals with disabilities have equal access to the full range of programs, services, activities and facilities of the agency. Upon request, **Nicholls State University** may provide a reasonable accommodation, unless the Requestor is not a qualified individual; doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the agency's service, program or activity; or poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual with a disability or others.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline **Nicholls State University** standards and procedures for purposes of ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 compliance.

### III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all **Nicholls State University** employees, applicants for employment, students, and members of the community that receive services from **Nicholls State University**.

### IV. DEFINITIONS

**A. Disability:** Under the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who:

1. Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. Has a record of such impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such impairment as described in item #1 above.

**B. Impairment:** Any physiological, mental or psychological disorder or condition, including those that are episodic or in remission, that substantially limits one or more major life activities when active.

**C. Substantially Limits:** An impairment that prevents the ability of an individual to perform one or more major life activities as compared to most people in the general population when taking into consideration factors such as the nature, severity, duration and long-term impact of the condition. Such consideration must be regardless of any mitigating measures such as modifications, auxiliary aids or medications used to lessen the effects of the condition (except for use of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses).

**D. Major Life Activities:**

1. Generally, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others and working; and
2. The operation of a major bodily function, including functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin; normal cell growth; and digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system.

**E. Essential Functions:** The fundamental and primary job duties of a position. Considerations in determining whether a function is essential include such factors as the written job description; whether the reason the position exists is to perform that function; the limited number of employees available to perform that function; and the degree of expertise required to perform the function.

**F. Qualified Individual:**

1. Under Title I, an individual with a disability who meets the requisite skill, experience, and education requirements for the position and who can perform the essential functions of the position held or applied for, with or without reasonable accommodation(s).
2. Under Title II, an individual with a disability who meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by **Nicholls State University**, with or without reasonable accommodation(s).

**G. Reasonable Accommodations:**

1. Under Title I, a modification or adjustment to the work, learning, or housing environment that will enable a qualified individual with a disability to:
  - a. Participate in the testing, application and/or interview process;
  - b. Perform the essential functions of the job; or
  - c. Provide equal opportunity to the benefits and privileges of employment.
  - d. Provide equal opportunity to pursue higher education
  - e. Provide accessible living accommodations for qualified students
2. Under Title II, a modification that permits an individual with a disability to effectively communicate with **Nicholls State University** and/or ensure equal opportunity relative to **Nicholls State University** programs, services, activities and facilities.

**H. Undue Hardship:** An accommodation that would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial or disruptive, in light of factors such as the size of the agency, the resources available and the nature of the agency's business operations.

**I. Direct Threat:** A significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of an individual with a disability or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.

**J. ADA/504 Coordinator:** The **Nicholls State University** representative responsible for facilitating the interactive, evaluation process relative to any request for accommodation, whose name and contact information is provided below.

Name: [Brian Clausen](#)  
Section: **Environmental Health and Safety**  
Address: **Safety Environmental Building 101**  
Phone #: **(985) 448-4783**  
Email: **brian.clausen@nicholls.edu**

## V. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

It is the responsibility of the qualified individual with a disability to request a reasonable accommodation(s) when needed. To do so, the individual:

- May initiate a request either verbally or in writing. If in writing, the qualified individual with a disability should complete the Request for Accommodation Form. If the individual needs assistance to complete the request form, **Nicholls State University** will provide such assistance;
- Must submit the request to the appropriate person for the nature of the accommodation requested (as further explained below); and
- Must timely and cooperatively participate in the interactive process (as further described therein).

If the accommodation request is from a **Nicholls State University** employee, they may be required, as part of the interactive process, to provide the ADA/504 Coordinator with medical documentation from their health care provider describing the nature of the disability and the functional limitations thereof. Students may be required to submit this information to the Student Access Center.

### A. Employment (Title I)

#### 1. Application/Testing Process

A qualified individual with a disability may address an accommodation request relative to the application and/or testing process to the following, dependent upon the Job Type indicated on the vacancy announcement:

- a. For Classified Jobs: Contact State Civil Service, Testing and Recruiting Office at (225) 925-1911. For more information regarding accommodations, applicants may go to <https://jobs.civilservice.louisiana.gov/TestInformation/Accommodations.aspx>.
- b. For Unclassified Jobs: Contact the **Nicholls State University** representative identified in the vacancy announcement for the job being sought. The **Nicholls State University** representative shall notify and collaborate with the ADA/504 Coordinator to address the accommodation request.

#### 2. Interview Process

If contacted for an interview, a qualified individual with a disability should notify the hiring manager at that time if an accommodation is

needed in order to participate in the interview and, if so, the nature of the accommodation. The hiring manager shall notify and collaborate with the ADA/504 Coordinator to address the accommodation request.

### **3. Performance of Essential Functions**

A qualified individual with a disability may address an accommodation request related to the performance of the essential functions of a job to the following:

- a. If needed prior to or at the time of hire for a position, the accommodation request should be submitted to the person with whom the individual interviewed.
- b. If employed by **Nicholls State University** and needed for the current job held, the accommodation request should be addressed to the immediate supervisor.

The interviewer or immediate supervisor shall notify and collaborate with the ADA/504 Coordinator to address the accommodation request. Such requests must include the duties the individual is unable to perform and the accommodation(s) requested. Such accommodations may include job restructuring, use of accrued paid leave (or once exhausted, unpaid leave), modified or part-time work schedules, acquiring equipment or reassignment.

### **4. Benefits and Privileges of Employment**

An employee seeking an accommodation related to the benefits and/or privileges associated with employment should notify the immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor shall notify and collaborate with the ADA/504 Coordinator to address the accommodation request. Such requests should include the benefits and/or privileges of employment in which the individual is unable to participate and the accommodation requested. Such accommodations may include restructuring work areas, lunchrooms, break rooms, training rooms and restrooms to make them available and accessible to all employees.

**NOTE:** Guidelines that govern facility standards are based on the date of original construction. Additional guidelines may apply when renovations or alterations are undertaken. **Nicholls State University** shall coordinate construction and renovation in conjunction with appropriate state departments, as well as building code, regulatory and leasing entities, as applicable.

## **5. Pregnancy, Childbirth or Related Medical Condition**

In accordance with La. R.S. 23:341-342, an applicant or employee with limitations arising from pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions may request an accommodation to the immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor shall notify and collaborate with the ADA/504 Coordinator to address the accommodation request. Such accommodations may include but are not limited to: providing more frequent, compensated break periods; providing a private place, other than a bathroom stall, for purposes of expressing breast milk; modifying food or drink policy; and other accommodations that permit the individual to reduce or eliminate the need for leave.

**NOTE:** Accommodation requests and information collected during the associated interactive process shall be limited to only those individuals with a business need-to-know.

### **B. Students (Title I)**

A qualified individual seeking an accommodation for learning and housing should notify the Student Access Center.

### **C. Effective Communication (Title II)**

A qualified individual with a speech, hearing or vision impairment may request an accommodation to the ADA/504 Coordinator and shall be furnished with appropriate auxiliary aids and services so that the individual can participate equally in **Nicholls State University** programs, services and activities. Such auxiliary aids may include qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille and other ways of making information and communication accessible. Employees who require an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication should contact the ADA/504 Coordinator as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event. Students must contact the Student Access center.

### **D. Modifications to Policies, Procedures, or Facilities (Title III)**

A qualified individual with a disability seeking modifications to policies, procedures or facilities for equal opportunity to enjoy **Nicholls State University** programs, services and activities should contact the ADA/504 Coordinator. Such requests should include the specific program, service or facility that the individual is unable to access and the accommodation(s) requested.

## VI. INTERACTIVE PROCESS - EVALUATION OF ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

Upon receipt, the individual to whom an accommodation request was submitted must immediately notify the ADA/504 Coordinator or Student Access Center. The ADA/504 Coordinator shall:

- Document the request, if not submitted in writing by the Requestor, on the Request for Accommodation Form;
- Notify the Requestor, if he/she is a current **Nicholls State University** employee or student, whether a completed Medical Inquiry Form from a health care provider is required;
- Engage in an interactive process involving consultation with the Requestor, the treating physician (if applicable) and agency management;
- Confer with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and/or Job Accommodation Network (JAN), as deemed appropriate, to help evaluate the availability of accommodation options and resources related thereto;
- Where appropriate, discuss any alternative, equally effective accommodations with the Requestor;
- Recommend to, and secure approval from, the Appointing Authority as to the final determination of the accommodation request; and
- Notify the Requestor, in writing, of the final determination, including information regarding the internal grievance procedure.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to suggest accommodations based upon their own life and/or work experiences. Such requested accommodations will be duly considered. Nonetheless, **Nicholls State University** reserves the right to select an equally effective accommodation that may be less expensive or impactful on business operations. All accommodation requests will be evaluated thoroughly and objectively on a case-by-case basis.

## VII. INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The following internal grievance procedures are available to individuals with disabilities for resolution of complaints regarding the disposition of an accommodation request or asserting any action that would be prohibited by the ADA:

- A. Employees: Nicholls State University** employees may file an internal grievance to the VP of Finance & Administration. Written complaints can be mailed to P.O. Box 2105, Thibodaux, LA 70310, or calling (985) 448-4001
- B. Applicants or General Public:** Complaints regarding the application/testing/interview process or accessibility of a program, service or

activity of the Nicholls State University may be addressed to the VP of Finance & Administration, by writing to: **P.O. Box 2105, Thibodaux, LA 70310** ; or calling **(985) 448-4001**.

- C. Students:** Complaints regarding the process or accessibility of educational programs, services, or activity of **Nicholls State University** may be addressed to the **Student Access Center Director**, by writing to: **P.O. Box 2087, Thibodaux, LA 70310** ; or calling **(985) 448-4430**.

## **VIII. PROTECTIONS**

No individual shall be discriminated or retaliated against, coerced, intimidated, threatened, harassed or interfered with for:

- Making an accommodation request;
- Opposing any act or practice made unlawful by the ADA and Section 504;
- Filing a charge, testifying, assisting or otherwise participating in an investigation, proceeding or hearing to enforce any provision of the ADA and Section 504;
- Aiding or encouraging another individual in the exercise of any right granted or protected by the ADA and Section 504; or
- Having a family, business, social or other relationship or association with an individual with a known disability.

## **IX. PUBLIC NOTICE**

To ensure accessibility by all interested persons, this policy shall be made available on the **Nicholls State University** public website located at <https://www.nicholls.edu/human-resources/forms/>, as well as a notice posted conspicuously for access by the public in each of the **Nicholls State University** facilities.

## **X. DOCUMENTATION**

Employee forms associated with this policy are available at <https://www.nicholls.edu/human-resources/forms/> or by request to the ADA/504 Coordinator. Students can access the Student Access Center at <https://www.nicholls.edu/student-access-center/>.

- Request for Accommodation Form
- Medical Inquiry Form



## **XI. CONFIDENTIALITY**

All documentation obtained as part of an accommodation request, including medical and other relevant information, shall be maintained as confidential records, separate from the employee's personnel file, and subject to disclosure only as allowed by law or with the individual's permission.

## **XII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

For additional resources, individuals with disabilities may contact Rikki Nicole David, State ADA Coordinator, at [rikki.david@la.gov](mailto:rikki.david@la.gov) or (225) 342-1243.

Individuals may also contact or file a complaint with the following:

- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) pursuant to Title I (29 CFR § 1630.1 – 1630.16) at 1-800-669-4000, 1-800-669-6820 (TTY for Deaf/Hard of Hearing callers only) or 1-844-234-5122 (ASL Video Phone for Deaf/Hard of Hearing callers only).
- Louisiana Commission on Human Rights pursuant to La. R.S. 23:323 et seq at 225-342-6969; or
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division, pursuant to Title II (28 CFR § 35.101 – 35.190) at 202-514-3847 or 202-514-0716 (TTY for Deaf/Hard of Hearing callers only).
- Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at 451 7<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Room 5100, Washington, D.C. 20202
- Office for Civil Rights Department of Education at 330 C Street SW, Suite 5000, Washington, D.C. 20201

Be advised that strict time limitations apply for filing complaints with these governmental agencies.

### **AUTHORIZED BY:**



**Alison Hadaway, HR Director**

10/10/2023

**DATE**



**Jay Clune, PhD, President**

10/10/2023

**DATE**