



WESTWOOD VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY POLICY AND NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Westwood Volunteer Fire Company (WFC) complies with Federal Civil Rights laws and is committed to providing its programs and services without discrimination in accordance with:

- *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*, which prohibits discrimination based on **race, color, or national origin** (including **language**).
- *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, which prohibits discrimination based on **disability**.
- *Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972*, which prohibits discrimination based on **sex** in education programs or activities.
- *Age Discrimination Act of 1975*, which prohibits discrimination based on **age**.
- *U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulation 6 C.F.R. Part 19*, which prohibits discrimination based on **religion** in social service programs.

These laws and the following policies apply in all cases to both our employees (firefighters are equivalent to employees) and those who receive our services of fire protection and rescue. The WFC Fire Chief or designee is responsible for administering this Policy.

It is against the law for any employee of WFC to retaliate against anyone who takes action to oppose discrimination, files a grievance, or participates in the investigation of a grievance in accordance with the above authorities.

Filing a Complaint and Determination

If you think that WFC has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way based on race, color, national origin (including language), disability, sex, age, or religion, or if you feel you were retaliated against in an investigation, you can file a complaint in person or by mail with: WFC Fire Chief, 1403 Valley Road, Coatesville, PA 19320. The WFC Fire Chief or designee will respond within 10 days of the complaint and include a copy of this Policy. The WFC Fire Chief or designee will investigate the complaint and advise the WFC Board of the results of the investigation. The WFC Board will determine appropriate action. All investigation and determination will be completed within 90 days of the complaint.

You may request additional information regarding the process for filing complaints in person or by mail at 1403 Valley Road, Coatesville, PA 19320.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL):

E-mail: CRCLCompliance@hq.dhs.gov (fastest method to submit your complaint)

Fax: 202-401-4708

U.S. Mail:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Compliance Branch, Mail Stop #0190
2707 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

For additional information: www.dhs.gov/crci Phone: 202-401-1474 Toll-Free: 1-866-644-8360

This nondiscrimination notice and the complaint process is publicly posted on the Westwood Volunteer Fire Company's website at www.westwoodfire.com. Copies are also posted in the manager's office at the fire station located at 1403 Valley Road, Coatesville, PA 19320.

Disability Access and Reasonable Accommodations

WFC is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an ***equal opportunity*** to participate in and benefit from our membership, programs, activities, and services.

Individuals may request ***reasonable accommodations*** from WFC that they believe will enable them to have such equal opportunity to participate in our programs, activities, and services. To request reasonable accommodations, contact : WFC Fire Chief, 1403 Valley Road, Coatesville, PA 19320 (in person or by mail). See Appendix 1, FAQ Reasonable Access.

If you speak Spanish, language assistance services are available free of charge. Call 610-344-6170 for assistance.

Si habla español, los servicios de asistencia lingüística están disponibles de forma gratuita. Llame al 610-344-6170 para obtener ayuda.

Language Access Plan

1. Identifying Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals who Need Language Assistance.

- Westwood Volunteer Fire Company (WFC) has conducted an assessment of the proportion of LEP individuals in our service area.
- The major language spoken by the LEP Population is Spanish by approximately 4% of the service area
- Our frequency of contact with LEP persons, is less than ten times per year on average.
- For other undetermined languages, language identification cards will be utilized to assist LEP persons to identify their language needs to staff.

2. Language Assistance Measures and Available Resources.

- On-Site Oral Interpretation – WFC has qualified bilingual staff that can respond to a need for an on-site interpreter or a contract interpreter can respond at the request of dispatch.

- Telephonic Interpretation – WFC can request an interpreter by telephone as needed.
- Translation Software – WFC may utilize translation software and applications as needed to communicate with LEP individuals if an interpreter is unavailable.
- For patient care events, WFC can request interpretation assistance to be coordinated through the Chester County Department of Emergency Services (911).
- Written forms are available in Spanish or will be translated by request
- WFC has a Spanish speaker on staff and outside interpreters.

3. Distribution of Plan and Training for Staff

- WFC will distribute the LEP plan to all employees. Any employee that is expected to communicate directly with the public will be trained to ensure that they understand the LEP plan and procedures and they are able to effectively coordinate with telephonic and in-person interpreters. All new employees will receive training to ensure that the above requirements are met prior to being released to a role where communicating with the public is necessary.

4. Providing Notice to LEP Persons.

- WFC will provide LEP persons a written statement advising them of the language assistance measures and resources that we utilize. The statement will include notice of our complaint procedures, including how to file complaints with our department and or the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) at crcl@hq.dhs.gov.

5. Monitoring, Assisting and Updating the LEP Plan.

- WFC staff will monitor each contact with LEP persons and will report any communication barriers to the Fire Chief or designee. These contacts will be recorded on a spreadsheet. If contact is made with an LEP person that is not Spanish-speaking, the Fire Chief or designee will take appropriate steps to determine if a new LEP population is emerging in the service territory and if so, will take steps to ensure that appropriate translation resources are available. Any additional resources added or other changes to the plan will be communicated to department staff.

6. Actions When Encountering LEP Persons.

- WFC employees will promptly identify the spoken language if it is not clearly identifiable on site. The staff will utilize language identification cards or software if needed.
- Spanish interpreters are available on staff. Our interpreters are able to interpret in-person, over the telephone or they can translate written material.
- Contact the incident commander on duty to contact an interpreter. If other languages are needed, contact dispatch for non-medical emergencies or medical control or the destination hospital for medical emergencies.

- As an alternative, employees can utilize translation software or applications for non-emergency issues if a reasonable level of service is likely to be achieved.
- Keep the LEP person calm while the translation services are coordinated.
- Do not delay emergency patient care or other critical services while translation service is coordinated.

Appendix 1

Frequently Asked Questions About Reasonable Accommodations (FAQ)

The following FAQ provides information on requesting reasonable accommodations in WFC's programs and activities.

1. What is a reasonable accommodation in WFC's program?

A reasonable accommodation is a change or modification to afford a qualified individual with a disability full enjoyment of WFC's programs or activities, unless modifications of policies, practices, and procedures would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service, or activity, or result in undue financial and administrative burdens to WFC.

2. How do I request a reasonable accommodation?

If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact : WFC Fire Chief, 1403 Valley Road, Coatesville, PA 19320 (in person or by mail).

3. Does my request for a reasonable accommodation need to be in writing?

No, you do not need to put your request in writing, however, making a written request can be helpful documentation for ensuring that WFC provides the desired accommodation. In addition, you do not need to use the specific words "reasonable accommodations" when making your request.

4. When should I request a reasonable accommodation?

You may request a reasonable accommodation from WFC at any time. However, making the request in advance of a meeting, conference call, or visit will help ensure WFC is able to fulfill the request for an accommodation. For certain requests, such as requests for sign language interpretation, WFC requests at least two week's advance notice.

5. May someone request a reasonable accommodation on my behalf?

Yes, anyone can request a reasonable accommodation on behalf of an individual with a disability who seeks to interact with WFC or participate in its programs or activities.

6. What will WFC do upon receiving my request for a reasonable accommodation?

WFC may contact you to obtain more information about your request and to better understand your needs. In addition, WFC may review your request to determine:

- Whether the requested accommodation will be effective in allowing you to participate in the activity or program in which you are seeking participation;
 - Whether the requested accommodation is reasonable, or an equally effective alternative to the requested accommodation is available; and
 - Whether providing you with the requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of WFC's program or impose undue financial or administrative burdens on WFC.
- In addition, in some cases, WFC may consult with you in an interactive process to determine on a case-by-case basis what accommodations can be made.

If WFC determines that your requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or impose an undue financial or administrative burden, WFC

Department may deny your request. However, in the unlikely event that this occurs, WFC will work with you to identify an alternative accommodation that allows you to effectively participate in WFC's Department's program, activity, or service.

7. Can WFC request medical documentation from you after receiving your request for a reasonable accommodation?

No, WFC may not request medical documentation after receiving your request for a reasonable accommodation. WFC's questions will be limited to understanding the barrier to your ability to participate in the program or activity in which you are interested and the nature of an accommodation that will remove this barrier.

8. May WFC charge you the cost of providing the reasonable accommodation?

No, you are not responsible for the cost of an auxiliary aid or service WFC provides to you.

9. What are some examples of reasonable accommodations?

There are many types of reasonable accommodations. Some examples of how WFC provides reasonable accommodations include:

- Arranging for qualified sign language interpreters
- Producing alternate formats of print materials in braille, large print, or in an electronic format
- Providing remote conference captioning services
- Furnishing a temporary ramp to access areas with one or more stairs to ensure accessibility for individuals who have physical disabilities and may be using a wheelchair or walker.