

Liberty University
Student Disability Grievance Policy and Procedures

Introduction and Policy Summary

Liberty University (“Liberty” or the “University”) policy strictly prohibits unlawful disability discrimination, as defined by applicable federal and state laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) and the Virginians with Disabilities Act (“VDA”). Moreover, Liberty University is committed to providing its qualified students who have documented disabilities with equal access to its education programs and activities through reasonable accommodations that neither fundamentally alter its programs and activities nor cause an undue burden on the University. Retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report of disability discrimination, retaliation against anyone who opposes in a reasonable manner an act believed to constitute disability discrimination, and retaliation against someone for participating in either an investigation or a grievance procedure related to disability discrimination is strictly prohibited, as well.

This document outlines the University’s grievance policies and procedures for students who (1) believe they were wrongly denied an accommodation requested through the Office of Disability Accommodation Support (“ODAS”) in accordance with ODAS procedures, or (2) were granted an accommodation by ODAS that they believe is not being provided or effectively implemented. This document references the University’s separate complaint policies and procedures for students who (1) believe they were wrongly retaliated against in violation of the University’s policy concerning disability discrimination, or (2) believe they were unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability. This policy also outlines procedures the University uses to investigate and respond to student grievances related to disability accommodations and references the separate procedures the University uses to investigate and respond to complaints of disability retaliation and discrimination.

The University’s Vice President for LU ONE | Opportunity and Enrichment

The Vice President for LU ONE | Opportunity and Enrichment (VP LU | ONE) coordinates the University’s compliance with applicable disability laws. The Vice President for LU | ONE oversees the University’s centralized response to reports of discrimination, including reports of disability discrimination, to ensure consistent implementation of university policies and procedures, including the Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy.

The Vice President for LU | ONE’s contact information is:

Greg Dowell
Vice President for LU | ONE
Liberty University
Montview Student Union, 2760D
Lynchburg, VA 24502
434-592-3888
odas@liberty.edu

The Vice President for LU | ONE may delegate responsibilities to designated administrators with appropriate training and/or experience, such as the Senior Executive Director of ODAS. The Senior Executive Director of ODAS’ contact information is:

Ester Warren
Senior Executive Director of ODAS
Liberty University Office of Disability Accommodation Support (ODAS)
DeMoss Hall, Room 1264

434-592-6468

ejwarren@liberty.edu

[ODAS Official Website](#)

Privacy

The University will make reasonable efforts to respect the privacy of parties involved in disability-related grievances and complaints, and information may be disclosed only as necessary to facilitate the thoroughness and integrity of the resolution process. The privacy of student educational records will be protected in accordance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) ("FERPA"). The privacy of an individual's medical records generally is protected by the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act](#) ("HIPAA") and where University treatment records are concerned, is protected by FERPA.

Accommodations Grievance Procedures

Liberty University students are required to request disability accommodations from ODAS in accordance with the policies and procedures located on the [ODAS Official Website](#). Liberty University is not required to provide disability accommodations that are requested outside of ODAS' policies and procedures. Thus, if a student requested a disability accommodation outside of ODAS that was either denied or not provided, the request should be re-submitted to ODAS in accordance with procedures found on the [ODAS Official Website](#).

Students with a grievance related to a denied request for disability accommodation that was processed by ODAS are encouraged to follow the grievance procedures outlined below. If the grievance is related to an ODAS-approved accommodation not being provided or effectively implemented, students should first attempt to resolve the grievance directly with the faculty or employee believed to not be providing the accommodation. Grievances should be filed as soon as possible to ensure a timely resolution with minimal effects on the student.

Grievances Related to an **ODAS-Denied** Request for Disability Accommodation

1. If a student's request for a disability accommodation is denied by ODAS, which also includes cases when accommodations are approved but the specific accommodations requested by the student were denied, the student may contest the decision to the Senior Executive Director of ODAS. The grievance must be submitted to the Senior Executive Director of ODAS within 15 calendar days of denial via email to odas@liberty.edu. The grievance must include the accommodation requested; the reason(s) that the student believes the (specific) requested accommodation should have been approved (and any supporting documentation); and, if applicable, a description of the efforts made to informally resolve the issue with the student's disability advisor.
2. Once the written grievance is received, the Senior Executive Director of ODAS will strive to review the grievance and issue a written decision to the student via email within fifteen (15) business days.
3. If the student is unsatisfied with the Senior Executive Director of ODAS' resolution of the grievance, the student may submit an appeal to the Vice President for LU | ONE. Students must submit an appeal to the Vice President for LU | ONE via email to odas@liberty.edu within five (5) business days of receiving the Senior Executive Director of ODAS' decision. The appeal must include all the materials and documentation that the student submitted to the Senior Executive Director of ODAS; the reason(s) for the appeal; and any additional information or documentation that should be considered. Upon receipt of the student's appeal, the Vice President for LU | ONE will strive to review the grievance and issue a written decision to the student via email within fifteen (15) business days.

Grievances Related to Not Providing an **ODAS-Approved** Disability Accommodation

1. If a student believes that a Liberty employee (including faculty) did not provide or did not effectively implement a disability accommodation that was approved by ODAS, he or she may file a grievance with ODAS. Such grievance must provide a clear and concise statement of the accommodation that was approved by ODAS and the Liberty employee who did not provide the accommodation. The grievance must be submitted to the Senior Executive Director of ODAS within 15 calendar days of the date that the Liberty employee failed to provide or effectively implement an ODAS-approved accommodation. Such grievance should be submitted via email to odas@liberty.edu. The subject line of the email should clearly indicate that is a grievance submitted under this section of the Policy via email to odas@liberty.edu. The Senior Executive Director of ODAS will review the grievance; conduct an inquiry into the matter, if necessary; and then determine whether the grievance is supported. If so, the Senior Executive Director of ODAS will work with appropriate Liberty employees, which may include department chairs, deans, the Provost's Office, and/or Human Resources to *resolve* the student's grievance. The Senior Executive Director of ODAS will strive to review the grievance and issue a written decision to the student and Liberty employee, including findings and any resolution, via email within fifteen (15) business days.
2. If the Senior Executive Director of ODAS determines the student's grievance is supported but is *unable to resolve* the grievance by providing a written decision to the student and Liberty employee, the matter will be referred to the Provost's Office or Human Resources, as appropriate based on the employee's status as staff or faculty. The Provost's Office or Human Resources may delegate the matter to a Dean or to the Director of Employee Relations, respectively, who will gather information and render a final decision that will be communicated to the student in writing within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the referral. To resolve grievances, the Provost's Office or Human Resources may work with the Vice President for LU | ONE, as needed, to implement approved accommodations or impose any employee discipline. Students will not be informed of any disciplinary actions involving the employee.
3. If the Senior Executive Director of ODAS determines the student's grievance is not supported, the matter will be referred to the Vice President for LU | ONE, who will review all of the information submitted by the student and any other information that informed the Senior Executive Director's determination that the student's grievance was not supported. The Vice President for LU | ONE will render a final decision that will be communicated to the student within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the matter for review from the Senior Executive Director of ODAS.

Disability Retaliation and Discrimination Complaint Procedures

Liberty University Office of Equity and Compliance Complaints

Any student may file a complaint of retaliation or of disability discrimination with the University's Office of Equity and Compliance pursuant to Liberty's Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy and all such complaints will be processed under that Policy. A complaint may be filed by [making a report](#) to the Office of Equity and Compliance, by email at oec@liberty.edu, by phone at 434-592-4999, or by scheduling an appointment with the Office of Equity and Compliance. A copy of the Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy is available at www.liberty.edu/equityandcompliance.

External Complaints of Disability Retaliation and Discrimination

Complaints about the University's application of Section 504 may be addressed to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR@ed.gov or 800-421-3481).