



GREATER BOSTON
LEGAL SERVICES
...and justice for all

July 14, 2017

VIA EMAIL

Ms. Kate Brown
DTA
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111

Re: LH- Accommodation Request

Dear Kate:

I am writing to request an ADA Accommodation on behalf of Lester H (Agency ID:###). Mr. H's TAFDC/SNAP case was just transferred to the new Quincy TAO and since the Client Assistance Coordinator for Quincy is temporary out of the office I write to you. Mr. H requires on-going accommodations in order to maintain benefits for his family. He has mental health, physical, and cognitive impairments that directly impact his ability to successfully complete activities expected by the Department in order to maintain eligibility.

Earlier this year, DES conducted a disability review process, and the doctors who performed the consultative exams found Mr. H to suffer from persistent depressive disorder, panic disorder and have limitations in his activities of daily living due to issues with his back, wrist, knee, and elbow pain. As a result of both his mental health and physical pain, it is especially difficult to go to DTA for appointments. The crowded waiting room triggers his anxiety and having to sit or stand too long leads to intense pain in his knee and a fear his legs will buckle when he attempts to walk.

In addition to the challenge of waiting in the DTA reception area, Mr. H has difficulty understanding DTA notices and forms. Having received erroneous notices in the past, he is especially worried that DTA will terminate his benefits and as a result, every notice increases his anxiety. Plus, Mr. H was in special education throughout school, repeated two grades, and continues to have challenges with reading comprehension. The combination of cognitive limitations and anxiety makes it extremely difficult to understand DTA notices and forms. While Mr. H sometimes reviews notices with his wife, J H, she too suffers from mental health and physical impairments and he cannot rely on her for assistance in understanding or filling out forms. He has called DTA workers directly, left messages, and waited patiently for return calls often to no avail, only adding to his anxiety. Furthermore, he has called the DTA Assistance line only to be directed to a worker's voice mail that is full.

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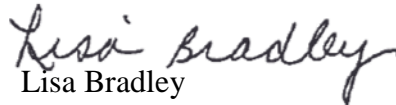
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Due to Mr. H's impairments, I ask that the Department provide the following accommodations:

1. **Do not require in-office interviews:** Conduct all interviews and other appointments by telephone and do not require Mr. H to attend in-person appointments at the DTA office.
2. **Help understanding notices:** Provide Mr. H a list of DTA staff he can call if he needs help understanding a notice he received. This list should include staff who will be available to talk by phone, will promptly return calls, and can help Mr. H understand what the notice is saying. Ideally this list will include a Client Assistance Coordinator, a case supervisor, and at least one local office manager.
3. **Assistance completing forms:**
 - a. When a form must be completed (such as a TAFDC or SNAP reevaluation form), complete the form with Mr. H by telephone and mail it to him to sign and return to the Department.
 - b. Provide pre-addressed return envelopes for Mr. H to return forms to the Department.

Thank you, in advance, for reviewing this request. If the Department has questions, or finds it necessary to discuss this request with Mr. H, as his legal representative, please call me and please ensure I am part of any conversation. If you don't have questions, and approve this request, please send me a copy of the approval.

Sincerely



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