

Reasonable Adjustment Statement

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1. Introduction

Premier Property Lawyers Limited (PPL) strives to provide excellent customer service and deliver high quality conveyancing services.

This statement sets out what a reasonable adjustment is, how to make a reasonable adjustment request to us, our duties and responsibilities and what considerations we will take into account when reviewing your request.

We must take reasonable steps in the way that we work to ensure we are compliant with Equality & Diversity legislation and regulations.

This statement does not seek to explain how we will approach every situation, it is intended as a general statement of our intention and:

- confirms our commitment to improving accessibility for everybody that we deal with;
- sets out some of the basic principles of our legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments; and
- sets out the factors that we will take into account when dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments.

2. What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment involves making a change to the way that we usually do things to ensure that we are fair to all of our clients. This may involve:

- departing from our usual practice in the way we do things, if we find that the current position places that person at a substantial disadvantage, for instance by allowing more time than we usually would for someone to respond or provide information; or
- providing additional support, such as a sign language interpreter or using a text relay service; or
- making sure our buildings do not present obstacles for disabled people, for instance by providing a lift or ground level meeting rooms.

We will not make assumptions about whether a disabled person requires any adjustments or about what those adjustments should be. We will discuss the requirements with the person concerned and seek to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances.

3. Our legal duties in relation to disabled people

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people, defined by the Act as those who have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This will, in some circumstances, mean that disabled people receive more favourable treatment than non-disabled people, which is lawful in the context of disability.

4. Duty to make reasonable adjustments as a service provider

As a service provider, PPL has a duty to make adjustments if the way that we carry out these functions, the absence of an auxiliary aid, or any physical feature places the disabled person at a "substantial disadvantage" compared to someone who is not disabled.

The duty requires PPL to consider what can be done to overcome any such disadvantage, and whether an adjustment can be made which is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case.

5. Requesting reasonable adjustments

To request a reasonable adjustment, please contact your conveyancer assigned to your case.

We will let clients know that we can provide reasonable adjustments, for example in the following ways:

- By asking whether an adjustment might be required;
- by publishing this statement on our website; and
- If a client asks whether we can make reasonable adjustments.

6. Types of reasonable adjustment we can offer

We will consider each request for reasonable adjustments individually as any reasonable adjustments will be unique to the circumstances of that individual. The adjustments will always be agreed with the person concerned to avoid making incorrect assumptions about a person's needs.

Some examples of the simple reasonable adjustments that staff can make may include:

- providing documents or correspondence in a larger font size;
- using email or the telephone in preference to hard copy letters where appropriate, which may assist those with a vision impairment;
- speaking clearly to the people with whom we deal and offering additional time to cover the issues they need to discuss—this will help everyone understand our processes and procedures;
- using plain English appropriate to the person we are dealing with and avoiding jargon.

Some other arrangements that we can provide will include:

- providing subtitles on our videos;
- using text relay services to hold calls;
- translating documents or correspondence into Braille;
- communicating with people through their representative (whether or not this is a legal representative) or advocate, if requested and approved by them;

- Using a sign language interpreter if you are hard of hearing to undertake the role of conversing with others on your behalf. We would normally expect you to source the interpreter although, if this is not possible, PPL will make reasonable efforts to locate a suitable person.

This is not an exhaustive list and other adjustments will be considered on a case by case basis. It is important to note that not all the adjustments (as listed above) will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations.

A minority of requests may require more detailed consideration and our approach to these requests is discussed in the section below.

7. Our response to requests for reasonable adjustment

In the majority of cases we will be able to agree and deliver the required reasonable adjustments with a minimum of delay. In some cases, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the difficulty a disabled person may be experiencing. For example, where the adjustment requested may be difficult to provide or where it may interfere with our statutory or regulatory obligations.

8. How do we decide what is "reasonable"?

The Equality Act does not define what is "reasonable" but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests that whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors; which may include:

- the needs of the disabled client;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment;
- how practical it is for us to make the adjustment; and
- whether your request would affect our responsibilities towards other people.

An adjustment will not be deemed to reasonable if it:

- involves unreasonable cost to PPL;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the transaction or PPL's IT systems.

9. Monitoring

Information about your disability is deemed 'sensitive personal data' and will be processed in line with Data Protection Legislation.

PPL will record and monitor the reasonable adjustments that have been requested and made. This will allow us to review the services we provide and help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve our services.

10. Review

This statement shall be reviewed and updated annually or after legislative changes, new case law or new guidance.