Visitors' Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Introduction

We are a Chambers committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion and to promoting a culture and practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no visitor or user of Chambers' services is subjected to disadvantages due to their disability, in comparison to a nondisabled individual, where a reasonable adjustment can be put in place.

Chambers recognises that reasonable adjustments may relate to visible and non-visible disabilities, including neurodivergence, mental health conditions, communication differences, sensory sensitivities, and temporary states of overwhelm or distress.

Individuals are not required to disclose a diagnosis in order to request support or adjustments.

This policy applies to clients and other visitors and users of Chambers' facilities.

Chambers' duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a positive obligation on the chambers to make all adjustments that are reasonable for the purpose of removing, reducing, or preventing substantial disadvantages faced by disabled individuals, when compared to nondisabled individuals.

The duty arises in relation to:

- any provision, criterion, or practice of Chambers
- any physical feature within Chambers
- any provision of auxiliary aids or service

Chambers' commitment

Chambers is committed to taking positive and proactive steps throughout all of our operations and the ongoing engagement of all individuals that access our services to ensure appropriate and effective adjustments are put in place.

This commitment covers all areas of Chambers' activities and infrastructure. This is a non-exhaustive list of examples of reasonable adjustments for visitors:

- Ramp access to the building
- Provision of information in different formats
- Hearing loops
- Accessible conference rooms
- Accessible toilet
- Accommodating personal assistants

- Providing written summaries of next steps
- Allowing extra processing time during conversations
- Offering quieter waiting or meeting spaces where available
- Reducing unnecessary sensory stimuli where reasonably practicable
- Offering communication in alternative formats (email, written notes, phone)
- Allowing breaks during meetings
- Permitting noise-cancelling headphones or sensory aids

Adjustments to other areas will be appropriate depending on the circumstances.

Arranging adjustments

Visitors are encouraged, but not required, to discuss any access, communication, or sensory needs in advance of their visit so that appropriate arrangements can be explored.
Visitors who would like information about potential adjustments for their visit or have specific requests for adjustments can contact the member they are meeting (if applicable), the clerk booking the meeting, or by calling Reception or by mailing **enquiries@doughtystreet.co.uk**.
Visitors can also visit the virtual tour of Chambers on the Accessibility page of the DSC website to look at access and available adjustments.

Barristers and clerks are responsible for considering reasonable adjustment requests for their visitors.

Barristers and clerks are also responsible for **anticipating** any potential reasonable adjustments that may be required for visitors whom they know to be disabled, or have reason to believe may be disabled, including seeking any further information from the visitor or their representatives where appropriate.
Where a client requests a reasonable adjustment, the barrister should inform the relevant clerk. The barrister and clerk should ensure that Reception any other relevant staff are informed, where necessary, to enable the agreed adjustment to be implemented.
Interviews at Chambers

Candidates invited to interview will be asked whether they require any reasonable adjustments to enable them to participate fully in the recruitment process. Adjustments may include, for example, accessibility arrangements, additional time for assessments, advance copies of interview questions where appropriate, or additional breaks. All requests will be considered on an individual basis and, where reasonable, implemented. Candidates will be informed of the arrangements in advance of the interview.

When considering requests, the People Operations team will focus on the adjustment or support required rather than seeking information about a medical diagnosis or condition. Candidates will only be asked for information necessary to understand and implement the requested adjustment.

Data protection & retention

Data will only be accessed by those who need to action requests and will be kept securely for

a 12-month period in order to facilitate further visits unless the visitor requests its deletion.

Consideration of reasonable adjustments

All requests relating to adjustments, and proactive consideration of adjustments, will be approached positively and with sensitivity in line with Chambers' commitment. No detriment, harassment or unfavourable treatment will result as a consequence of an individual bringing any adjustment matters to the attention of Chambers.

All requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the advice and assistance of the People Operations Team. Full consideration will be given to each adjustment to determine whether it:

- reduces, removes, or prevents the disadvantage faced by the individual requesting the reasonable adjustment, and
- it is reasonable for Chambers to make.

Staff, members, and clerks should communicate clearly, calmly, and respectfully when discussing adjustments or supporting visitors who may be distressed or overwhelmed.
Where appropriate, information should be broken into manageable steps, understanding checked without pressure, and options offered regarding pace, format, or method of communication.

Chambers will focus on understanding the support or adjustment required rather than seeking diagnostic or medical details unless strictly necessary and proportionate.

Where reasonably practicable, Chambers will consider sensory and environmental adjustments, including lighting, noise levels, waiting arrangements, and meeting-room suitability.

Wherever possible, visitors requesting adjustments should be informed clearly about:

- what adjustments can be provided,
- any limitations,
- who will support the arrangements,
- and the next steps following their visit or enquiry.

If Chambers forms the provisional view that it is unable to make the adjustment requested, this will be discussed with the visitor before a final decision is reached and the matter will be referred to the COO, who will also discuss alternative adjustments.

It is Chambers' policy to comply with requests where reasonably practical regardless of whether required under the Equality Act.

In no circumstances will Chambers pass on the costs of a reasonable adjustment to the disabled person.

A confirmation of the adjustments that will be put in place will be sent to the individual.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

- Where possible, the host of the visit (members, clerk or staff) will gather information about the assistance that the visitor will require in case of evacuation before the visit and inform the Finance Director. This is particularly important when several visitors are due to attend an event who all require assistance.
- Visitor PEEP forms are available from Reception staff or via the link on this page: Blank-Visitor-PEEP.pdf
- A copy of the visitor's PEEP should be sent to reception and copied to the Finance Director.
- Upon arrival the visitor and any personal assistants or helpers will be given a copy of the PEEP by the host and appraised of any special arrangements that have been put in place, including access & egress routes, and who will assist them in the case of an evacuation.
- Chambers will keep a copy of the visitor PEEP for 12 months, in order to facilitate further visits unless the visitor requests its deletion.
- For the avoidance of doubt, approval by the Finance Director is not required for a visitor's PEEP.

Concerns

If an individual has any concerns regarding the making or consideration of reasonable adjustments, they are encouraged to bring this to the attention of People Operations Team or the COO as soon as possible. Once made aware, the person nominated will undertake an investigation and feedback to the individual concerned.

An individual can make any complaint about treatment of reasonable adjustment requests to the CEO.