

Questions and Answers on Processing Requests for Computer/Electronic Accommodation Program (CAP) Services

The Department of Homeland Security has entered into an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Defense's Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP). The CAP will now provide reasonable accommodations to Department of Homeland Security employees with disabilities quickly, effectively, and at no cost.

All managers and employees need to be aware of this exciting new source for facilitating requests for reasonable accommodations. Below are a set of questions and answers that will help managers and employees to understand this very worthwhile and effective program. If you have any questions or need further assistance regarding this program, please contact your component's EEO office, the CAP (contact information is below), or call Tanya Cantrell of DHS's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at (202) 692-4253.

How do I start the process of requesting reasonable accommodations?

CAP services employees with visual, hearing, dexterity and cognitive/communicative disabilities. Employees with a disability in need of CAP services need to contact CAP directly to request a needs assessment. http://www.tricare.osd.mil/cap/acc_proc/acc_proc_needs_assess.cfm. CAP will work with the employee to conduct the needs assessment, and identify appropriate solutions. Managers and supervisors may also contact CAP to discuss reasonable accommodations, provide input on the job assignment and nature of the work.

How do I go about requesting reasonable accommodations through CAP?

After the employee contacts the CAP, a technician will conduct a needs assessment to determine the essential job requirements and assess the physical and cognitive skills required for job performance. The employee's functional limitations to performing the job will be assessed along with alternative approaches to accomplishing the essential job tasks. The technician will then explore available hardware, software, applications, and communications to meet the need.

Once the appropriate accommodation is determined, employees must complete the CAP Accommodation Request Form. The CAP Request Form must specify the item requested, and clearly state the justification for the accommodation. Employees need to describe the essential aspects of their jobs, what the disability is, and how the requested accommodation(s) will assist them in their job performance. The employee requesting accommodation(s) and the employee's supervisor must sign the Request Form. Completed CAP request Form is then submitted to CAP on-line . http://www.tricare.osd.mil/cap/acc_proc/acc_proc_request.cfm or a hard copy may be submitted by Fax: (703) 681-9075.

The organizational element's Local Area Network (LAN) Administrator needs to be consulted regarding any computer technology to determine compatibility of the new devices. Therefore, a copy of the request should also be submitted to appropriate offices, which has IT responsibilities.

Employees with disabilities may already be familiar with the assistive devices they require to meet their need. These employees may complete and submit the CAP Request Form to the

CAP without participating in the assessment process. For example, a new employee who wears hearing aids needs a volume control device on her office phone because the volume control on the phone is insufficient to meet her needs. She has used volume control devices in her prior place of employment and is familiar with the product. She would not necessarily need to go through the assessment process to request a volume control device from CAP.

Is medical documentation required?

In most cases, medical documentation is not needed. However, employees requesting reasonable accommodations might be requested to provide a medical diagnosis of their disability. When it is required, the processing time may also be longer. CAP technicians and the supervisor will notify the employee requesting reasonable accommodation of any delays in processing the CAP request.

All medical information, including information about functional limitations and reasonable accommodation needs, obtained in connection with a request for reasonable accommodation **will be kept confidential**. The information shall be kept in files separate from the individual's personnel file. In addition, employees who obtain or receive such information are strictly bound by these confidentiality requirements. Whenever medical information is disclosed, the individual disclosing the information must inform the recipients of the information about the confidentiality requirements that attach to it.

How long before the devices or services are provided?

CAP usually processes the request for equipment within seven to ten days. The equipment is delivered directly to the employee's office, and becomes the property of that employee's office. The equipment stays with the employee as long as the employee needs it to do the job. This is also true if the employee changes locations.

If the equipment is not delivered within the timeframe, contact CAP at (703) 681-8813 (V/TTY). CAP is responsible to follow-up with the vendor. If the employee requires specific training on the new CAP product, CAP will provide the name and telephone number of the selected vendor to coordinate the dates and/or time directly to the employee.

Who provides Installation?

If there are technical issues related to the installation, CAP could assist in finding resources to help the appropriate office or IT staff with the installation.

Does CAP support telecommuting?

Yes. In fact, the only time CAP will provide computers is to support telecommuting. CAP will provide equipment for telecommuting from the employee's home. In addition to computers, CAP will also provide assistive technology, such as a printer, mouse, monitor and keyboard. The equipment belongs to the employee's office, and must be returned to that office when the telecommuting arrangements end.

CAP will deliver the equipment to employee's office. The employee's office is responsible for delivery and setting up the equipment in the employee's home.

Does CAP Provide Training?

If requested, CAP will either provide the training on the devices they provide, or fund another vendor to provide it to the individual to ensure proper and effective use.

Is there a limit to the number of CAP requests per employee?

No. CAP's goal is to provide the assistive technology and services necessary to ensure that employees with disabilities have equal access to the information environment and are just as productive in the workplace as employees with disabilities. Also, disabling conditions may change, warranting new or different forms of accommodations.

A separate CAP Accommodation Request Form must be completed and submitted to CAP for each device or service requested. The Point of Contact person listed on the form is the person who will be accountable for the equipment and able to answer any questions concerning the request.

Additional CAP services

CAP is available to conduct presentations to educate interested parties about and other disabilities issues, and will also provide guidance on healthy work environments make recommendation to improve or create accessible electronic environments.

How do I obtain additional Information?

Supervisors and employees are welcome to contact CAP when you have any questions at all. CAP can be reached at:

- (703) 681-8813 (VOICE)
- (703) 681-0881 (TTY)
- (703) 681-9075 (FAX), or
- email CAP@tma.osd.mil.

Employees are also encouraged to visit the CAP website: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/cap/>