

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers
Personal Assistance Services Frequently Asked Questions

Personal Assistance Services

Personal Assistance Services (PAS) means “assistance with performing activities of daily living that an individual would typically perform if he or she did not have a disability, and that is not otherwise required as a reasonable accommodation, including, for example, assistance with removing and putting on clothing, eating, and using the restroom.” Someone providing PAS might push a wheelchair or assist someone with getting into or out of a vehicle at the worksite.

Q: Who may request a PAS?

A: The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) is only required to provide PAS to an individual if:

1. The individual is an employee of the agency;
2. The individual has a targeted disability;
3. The individual requires the services because of his or her targeted disability;
4. The individual will be able to perform the essential functions of the job, without posing a direct threat to safety, once PAS and any required reasonable accommodations have been provided; and
5. Providing PAS will not impose undue hardship on the agency.

Q: What is a Targeted Disability?

A: Targeted disabilities are a subset of conditions that would be considered disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act. The federal government has recognized that qualified individuals with certain disabilities face significant barriers to employment, which for some people may include lack of access to PAS in the workplace, that are above and beyond the barriers faced by people with the broader range of disabilities. The federal government calls these “targeted disabilities.”

Note, however, that not everyone with a targeted disability will be entitled to PAS under the new regulations, because only some individuals with targeted disabilities require assistance with basic activities like eating and using the restroom. Medical conditions that are more likely to result in the need for PAS include, for example, missing limbs or paralysis due to spinal cord injury.

Q: Can I receive a PAS to commute to work?

A: No. FLETC is only required to provide PAS when the individual is working or on work-related travel.

Q: Does a PAS include medical services?

A: No. PAS do not include, for example, performing medical procedures (e.g., administering shots) or medical monitoring (e.g., monitoring blood pressure).

Q: Does a PAS help an individual perform their job functions?

A: No. PAS allow individuals to perform activities of daily living that an individual would typically perform if he or she did not have a disability. PAS do not help individuals with disabilities perform their specific job functions, such as reviewing documents or answering questions that come through a call-in center. PAS differ from services that help an individual to perform job-related tasks, such as sign language interpreters who enable individuals who are deaf to communicate with coworkers, and readers who enable individuals who are blind or have learning disabilities to read printed text. Those services are required as reasonable accommodations, if the individual needs them because of a disability and providing them does not impose undue hardship on the agency. An agency's obligation to provide reasonable accommodations is unaffected by the new regulations.

Q: How do I request a PAS?

A: Individuals request a PAS exactly the same way one requests a reasonable accommodation and the PAS procedure is exactly the same as the procedure for reasonable accommodations. Requests do not need to mention Section 501 or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) regulations explicitly, or use terms such as "PAS" or "affirmative action" to trigger the agency's obligation to consider the request.

Q: Can my request for a PAS be denied?

A: Yes. The FLETC is only required to provide PAS if the requesting employee is entitled to them under the regulations. Therefore, FLETC may deny a request for PAS if:

1. The requestor is not an employee of the agency;
2. The requestor does not have a targeted disability;
3. The targeted disability does not create a need for PAS;
4. The requestor is not able to perform the essential functions of the job, even with PAS and any reasonable accommodations;
5. The requestor would create a direct threat to safety on the job, even with PAS and any reasonable accommodations; or
6. Providing PAS would impose undue hardship on the agency.

Q: Is my information confidential?

A: Yes, as per the FLETC's reasonable accommodation procedures.

For any questions regarding PAS procedures, please contact the FLETC EEO Office at 912-267-3316.