

Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities

at

Harvard Law School

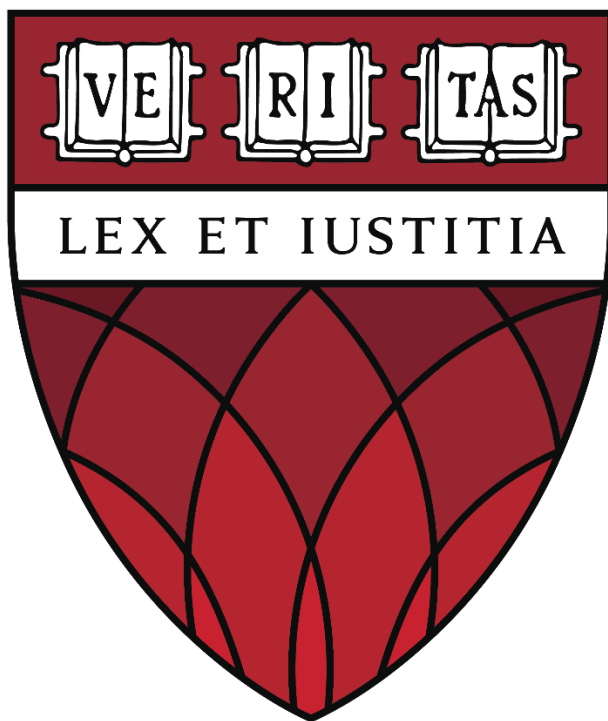


Figure 1 Harvard Law School Shield

2026-2027 Academic Year

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Welcome and Introduction

Disability is a welcome and celebrated part of the diversity that makes up Harvard University's student body. In any given year, we have students representing apparent and non-apparent disability experiences. Categories include mental health diagnoses, chronic health conditions, sleep disorders, allergies, autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disabilities, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), among others.

How many disabled students are there at Harvard? Disabled people constitute one of the nation's largest minority groups, constituting approximately 20% of the general population. Harvard students may choose to self-identify as having a disability at any time, and because of this, the numbers vary from year to year. The number of disabled students at Harvard University aligns with the national average of between 10-20% of the student body, depending on school affiliation.

Despite the prevalence of disability as a lived experience, many post-secondary students with disabilities report experiencing social and environmental barriers. This guide has been created with these very things in mind.

Additional Resources:

[National Center for Education Statistics Students with Disabilities Fast Facts](#)

Wondering if this resource guide is for you?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, disability-focused US civil rights and anti-discrimination laws, each define disability as a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. In 2008, the ADA was expanded and now applies to a significant variety of medical conditions. Legal definitions aside, disability is a lived experience that impacts individuals differently.

Some students may view their disability as part of their identity, while others may receive disability-related accommodations without considering themselves disabled. No matter where you fall on the spectrum, this tool was developed to provide you with answers to frequently asked questions, direct you to available supports, and highlight campus and community resources.

If I identify as disabled, or am not sure whether I qualify for accommodations, where do I begin?

As a student with a disability or health condition, you may be wondering about navigating campus life, accessing accommodations and everything in between. For all things accessibility at Harvard University, the HLS Accessibility Services team will be your main point-of-contact. Even if you do not identify as disabled, this resource may be an important resource for you throughout your time here.

Local Disability Coordinators (LDC)

Here at Harvard University, contacting the HLS Accessibility Services team is an important first step for resources and information as a student with a disability. Once you are registered, you will be assigned a Local Disability Coordinator (LDC), who can help you through the reasonable accommodation process,

enhance your understanding of your rights and responsibilities as a student with a disability, connect you to important resources, and generally be a support during your time at HLS.

Please email accessibility@law.harvard.edu or visit <https://hls.harvard.edu/home/accessibility-services-resources/>. You may also call (617) 384-0300.

University Disability Resources

Harvard [University Disability Resources](#) (UDR) provides leadership to university efforts in maintaining an accessible, inclusive welcoming learning and working environment for individuals with disabilities while complying with federal and state regulations.

UDR serves as a central resource for students, faculty, staff, researchers, and visitors on disability-related information, procedures, and services for the community. They also provide expertise in the development, implementation, and acquisition of the best and promising disability-related University practices.

UDR offers the following services to the Harvard community:

- **Consultation.** UDR is available to consult with community members related to best practices for accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Topics UDR may consult on include: accommodations for students, researchers, employees or visitors; access for service animals in campus spaces; and effective communication with community members who are deaf or hard of hearing. Consultation may be initiated by a phone call (617.495.1859 or TTY 617.496.0466), or email to disabilityresources@harvard.edu.
- **Accessible Events.** UDR's website and Accessibility Consultants can provide information on how to run accessible in-person, remote, or hybrid events.
- **Training.** UDR provides education in support of increasing accessibility and inclusion of Harvard community members with disabilities.
- **Technology and Equipment Loans.** UDR's Assistive Technology Library and Lab (ATLL) offers people the ability to try out technology to see if it is helpful to them. The ATLL also loans assistive technology and equipment such as wheelchairs or assistive listening devices, to any member of the community.
- **Accommodations.** Harvard community members with questions about reasonable accommodations for themselves or others may contact UDR at disabilityresources@harvard.edu for consultation.

UDR also manages [Harvard University's Disability Grievance Policy and Procedure](#) that is intended to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints by any Harvard employee, student enrolled in a Harvard course or program, or other community member who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability.

While LDCs are students' main point-of-contact for accommodations, UDR is available to students for any of the above-mentioned support.

Understanding More about Disability

Disability is the largest marginalized group in the world, spanning all identity groups including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and veteran status. According to the most recent US Census, nearly 60 million Americans live with one or more disabilities.

Most disabilities are non-apparent, meaning they may not be evident through observation alone some or all of the time. Examples of non-apparent disabilities include learning disabilities like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia, as well as mental health disabilities such as bipolar disorder, anxiety, and depression. Physical disabilities can also sometimes be non-apparent, such as when an individual experiences HIV/AIDS, Crohn's disease, allergies, or chronic pain or illness. Some conditions are only visible under certain circumstances like when a mobility device or other tool is used.

I am new to disability or still adjusting.

Disability is a lived experience that sometimes requires adjustment, particularly to a new diagnosis or recently acquired disability. Regardless of the specific type, disability can have social, emotional, physical, financial, academic, professional, and other impacts. Many individuals benefit from connecting to other members in the disabled community. Moreover, rehabilitation, counseling, and disability-specific training are sometimes useful to help with the adjustment. Your HLS Accessibility Services team and Harvard's University Disability Resources are great places to learn more about available supports at Harvard and in the community.

What does it mean to have a disability identity?

Many people with disabilities view their disability as a core aspect of their identity. Seen as more than a medical condition or diagnosis, for these individuals, disability contributes to their self-perception and connectedness to others in the disabled community. Disability, like other aspects of identity such as race or sexual orientation, does not exist in a vacuum. Rather, the many aspects of an individual's identity intersect to shape one's sense of self.

Through a medical or legal lens, the terms disability and disabled are specifically defined and require specific criteria, but from a personal identity perspective, the labels people choose to describe themselves are highly individualized and a personal choice.

What is disability pride?

Disability pride is the recognition of disability as an integral and appreciated part of an individual's identity. Moreover, disability pride celebrates the value and contributions of disability in society. July is recognized at Harvard and in many communities across the United States as Disability Pride Month.

What are Accommodations?

Accommodations are alterations, changes, or modifications to any Harvard policy, practice or procedure. Put simply, accommodations reduce or remove barriers so that Harvard's community members with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate. Examples of reasonable accommodations for

students include, but are not limited to: sign language interpreters; note takers; materials in alternative formats (such as braille, different font size or digital format). Accommodations are individualized and identified through an interactive process. This individualization means that someone might receive different accommodations in different courses, or different people in the same course may receive different accommodations even if they have the same disability. Harvard considers a student's preference when assessing requests for necessary reasonable accommodations, but at times Harvard may offer an alternative accommodation, so long as the alternative is effective.

An accommodation is not reasonable if it would: lower or substantially modify academic requirements (e.g. a request to change the content of an exam, or a request to be exempt from assigned work); impose an undue administrative burden (e.g. reminders of deadlines); be provided by Harvard for personal use or study (e.g. hearing aids, personal care attendants, or tutors or coaches); or require a fundamental alteration of the nature of Harvard's programs or activities. If a requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of a Harvard program or activity, other accommodations will be considered to permit participation in the program or activity to the maximum extent possible.

What accommodations are available to me at HLS?

There is no one size fits all approach when it comes to accommodations. Two people with the same disability may have different needs. Determining reasonable accommodations for everyone requires an interactive process between the student and HLS Accessibility Services. To get started, please contact accessibility@law.harvard.edu.

I am not sure I need accommodations. Should I still contact HLS Accessibility Services?

HLS Accessibility Services is a great resource whether you need reasonable accommodations now or in the future. They are here to talk through supports you may have had previously as well as what to expect as a student at HLS. Even if you do not end up needing reasonable accommodations, HLS Accessibility Services can be a resource in other ways. They can provide consultation on access-related matters and assist you in making connections to academic and other resources.

I have never been formally diagnosed with a disability, but I think I may benefit from accommodations. What do I do?

Contact HLS Accessibility Services. They will be able to discuss your eligibility criteria for receiving reasonable accommodations. They can also help identify the additional information, such as a medical assessment and related documentation, that may be needed to make a determination about your eligibility for accommodations. Receiving accommodations does not flag your record or change your standing as a student in any way. Information provided to an LDC is kept private and only shared with people that have a legitimate educational reason to access that information.

Where can I go for disability-related diagnostic testing?

Diagnostic tests can provide important clarity about disability-related barriers and their impact on learning, living, and working environments. They must be administered by qualified professionals with expertise in the area being examined. Where to go for diagnostic testing depends on the type of testing

needed. If you are not sure where to begin, consider asking your physician for a referral. You may also reach out to HLS Accessibility Services for diagnostic testing centers in the area. It is important to note that students are responsible for costs associated with diagnostic testing. In some cases, health insurance may provide partial or full coverage for some tests. The timeline for testing or evaluation can also be variable. Certain evaluations are time intensive, can span multiple sessions, and there may be a waiting period prior to receiving results. Diagnostic testing does not guarantee the provision of a specific accommodation but can provide you with helpful information about your condition.

[What does Harvard look for in disability-related documentation?](#)

Accommodations decisions at Harvard are informed by a variety of sources of information including your description of your personal experience and documentation such as any assessments by qualified health care providers. Documentation, if requested by the LDC, must: be from a health care provider with the expertise to give an opinion about the student's disability and functional limitations; outline the current impact of the disability; identify a connection between the disability and the accommodation requested; and substantiate why the requested reasonable accommodation is needed. If your LDC receives documentation that does not provide the information they need to assess your accommodation request, the LDC will let you know what information is missing and will give you an opportunity to provide additional documentation.

[Where can I learn more about my rights as a graduate student with a disability?](#)

HLS Accessibility Services is committed to providing equal opportunities for qualified community members with disabilities to access and participate in its academic, social, employment, cultural and recreational programs. This commitment is grounded not only in disability law, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments of 2008, but also in Harvard's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging for all members of the community.

Your HLS Accessibility Services team and UDR are excellent sources of information about your rights as a student with a disability. If at any time you wish to appeal an accommodation decision, or feel that you have experienced disability-related discrimination at Harvard, you may use the [University Disability Grievance Policy and Procedure](#).

Additional resources:

[Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

[Disability Rights, Education, Activism, and Mentoring Group \(DREAM\)](#)

[Massachusetts Disability Rights Laws](#)

[Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education— US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights](#)

[Postsecondary Institutions and Students With Disabilities | ADA National Network](#)

[Filing a Complaint with Harvard University Disability Resources](#)

My family member(s) want to be informed about my accommodations. To what extent may they be involved?

Consistent with federal guidance, we look to students to communicate on their own behalf in the postsecondary setting. Students know their own needs best. Family members are not invited to access meetings with the HLS Accessibility Services team and Harvard does not provide families with information about a student's accommodations or academic/personal progress. As the individual receiving services, you are welcome to share as much or as little information as you wish with family members.

Additional resources:

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#)

[Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education— US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights](#)

I am in the USA for the first time. Where can I learn more about how disability services operate here?

Your LDC is an excellent source of information on this topic and is here to help you navigate disability accommodations. The US Department of State has also created a helpful [guide for international students with disabilities](#) who are going to be educated in the USA.

Additional Resources:

[International Student Support—Harvard University Office of International Education](#)

Academic Accessibility and Inclusion

How do I let my faculty know about my approved accommodations?

When you meet with HLS Accessibility Services to discuss accommodations, they will tell you about the process used to notify faculty of approved accommodations. Please note that this notification process does vary by school, so if you cross-register at another school you should let HLS Accessibility Services know promptly and they will coordinate with that school's LDC to get accommodations set up for you.

Here at HLS, academic classroom accommodations may be shared with faculty through official HLS Accessibility Services notification emails at the start of (and at times, throughout) each semester. Faculty are only notified of a student's accommodation(s) if the accommodation occurs in classroom environment and requires the faculty's knowledge before implementation (i.e. CART services, ASL interpreters, Captioned Media, Microphones, etc.) Due to the anonymous grading of HLS exams, exam accommodations are implemented by the HLS Accessibility Services team and the Office of the Registrar.

It is important to know that this notification system is not fully automated. Students must log into the student portal on the [Accessibility Services Resources page](#) at the start of each semester to submit a Semester Request and select specific accommodations for each course based on their needs and the course design.

What if I disagree with the accommodation decision?

Harvard considers a student's preference when assessing requests for necessary reasonable accommodations, but at times Harvard may offer an alternative accommodation, so long as the alternative is effective. If you disagree with the accommodation decision that is made, first notify HLS Accessibility Services. If you are unable to reach agreement, you may appeal that accommodation decision using the [Harvard University Disability Grievance Policy and Procedure](#).

What if my accommodation needs change during the semester?

There are many reasons why a student's accommodations may need to be adjusted. The onset of a new disability, changes to the condition, and changes in course format are a few examples. Reasonable accommodations may be requested or changed at any time, though it is best to have accommodations in place at the start of the semester when possible. Some reasonable accommodations take time to acquire and implement so it is important to notify HLS Accessibility Services as soon as possible if you will need a new accommodation or adjustment to your current approved reasonable accommodations.

Will my same accommodations be in place if I take a course at another Harvard school?

Like all accommodations, requests for a cross-registered course are considered on a case-by-case basis. If you register in a course at another Harvard school, notify HLS Accessibility Services as soon as possible. Your LDC will work with you and your host school (the Harvard school where you will take one or more courses) to assess what accommodations will be needed in the host school course(s).

Will my same accommodations be in place if I take a course at another school that is not Harvard?

Harvard students sometimes cross-register in non-Harvard schools such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In these instances, you are advised to promptly contact that school's disability services office to notify them of your request for accommodations. Your LDC will be happy to share information with the cross-registered school, if you grant permission. Contact HLS Accessibility Services to discuss.

What if I have concerns about implementation of my accommodation?

If you believe that there are problems in the implementation of your accommodation, please notify HLS Accessibility Services as soon as possible. You may also refer faculty directly to HLS Accessibility Services if they have questions about your accommodations or seem to want more information about your accommodations.

Beyond reasonable accommodations, what learning supports are available at HLS?

Please visit the HLS Dean of Students page on [Academic and Personal Support](#) to learn more about available resources.

Campus, Community, and Social Life

Here at HLS and across the University we hope you will take advantage of the many opportunities to build your network and get involved in campus activities.

How can I connect with other students/individuals with disabilities?

Start by checking for upcoming events and announcements from [University Disability Resources](#). Past community building events have included disability pride celebrations, movie screenings, panel discussions, a comedy show, and an ASL and salsa dancing workshop. Harvard College also maintains a [calendar of events](#) that includes events across campus. Getting involved with local student-led clubs (or starting one) is another great way to build community.

[Harvard Disabled Law Students Association-- An Affinity Group for Harvard Law Students with Disabilities](#)

Student Accessibility Advisory Group

The Student Accessibility Advisory Group (SAAG) is an extension of the [University Accessibility Committee](#), and aims to amplify students' voices in university efforts to promote accessibility and inclusion. The group is comprised of student representatives from across Harvard's schools. Participation involves monthly meetings with fellow students and staff representatives from University Disability Resources, the Office for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, and Student Affairs. Past projects include helping to launch Harvard's first Disabled Affinity Graduation Celebration, creating this Resource Guide, and establishing a Faculty Award for Accessibility and Inclusion. With questions or for more information on how to get involved, please contact disabilityresources@harvard.edu.

Additional resources:

[University Accessibility Committee—Office of the Provost](#)

Ability+

[Ability+](#) is Harvard's employee resource group for staff, faculty, and researchers with disabilities. They hold monthly meetings that include presentations on disability-related topics, breakout rooms aimed at community building, and other opportunities to get involved. Students who also hold staff positions may be interested in learning more.

Additional resources:

[Ability+](#)

[Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities](#)

[Disability Rights, Education, Activism, & Mentoring Group for College Students with Disabilities](#)

[Harvard College Calendar of Events](#)

[I want to get involved in a Harvard-sponsored club or sport. How do I request accommodations?](#)

Harvard explores requests for reasonable modifications, aids or services that will allow a student with a disability to participate in its programs, including extracurricular activities. While this does not mean that Harvard will change the nature of a selective team, or alter elements that are essential to the nature of the program, it does mean that the program will explore accommodations that will provide a student with an equal opportunity to participate. Please contact the group organizer to request accommodations as needed. You may also contact HLS Accessibility Services or [University Disability Resources](#) for general information on best practices for accessibility and inclusion.

Additional Resources:

[US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights Dear Colleague Letter on Extracurricular Athletics](#)

[Adaptive Sports New England](#)

[Harvard Athletics](#)

[Universal Access Program —Mass.Gov](#)

Mental and Physical Wellbeing

A holistic approach to health and wellbeing is foundational for students to thrive academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. For this reason, Harvard University and HLS offer a number of resources and tools to promote an active and nourishing environment for students' minds and bodies.

[In what ways can I support my health and wellbeing while a student at Harvard Law School?](#)

To assist students in prioritizing their wellbeing, Harvard has created a [wellness training video](#) that overviews ways to support wellbeing, seek care as needed, and help others when possible.

Harvard Recreation provides access to gyms and fitness classes.

Harvard's [Center for Wellness and Health Promotion](#) offers workshops, services and classes centered on wellbeing.

Students in need of additional support for mental health can access [CAMHS Cares](#), which is a 24/7 support line for Harvard students with mental health concerns, whether in immediate distress or not, on-campus or elsewhere. [TimelyCare](#) is a virtual telehealth and wellbeing platform that is also available for Harvard students.

Additional Resources:

[Supporting Wellbeing and Mental Health at Harvard](#)

[Harvard University Support Resources for Times of Crisis](#)

[CAMHS Cares](#)

[TimelyCare](#)

Work, Internships, and Study Abroad

There may be times when students need accommodations or other disability-related supports outside of their typical environment. Depending on a variety of factors, knowing where to go for resources may not be the most straight forward. Once again, connecting with HLS Accessibility Services is a good starting point as you look for answers to these types of questions. If they are not the source of the solution, they will point you in the right direction.

How do I get accommodations for my campus job?

Students with paid and unpaid employment opportunities at Harvard who wish to explore reasonable accommodation within their employment should initiate a request by contacting their [local Human Resources office](#) or Faculty Affairs. If a student is unsure who to contact to initiate this request, they may contact [University Disability Resources](#) for help identifying the appropriate office.

For academic, housing, or other accommodation requests, students should contact their [Local Disability Coordinator \(LDC\)](#). Many LDCs have resources and forms posted on their website to initiate a request.

What accommodations will be available to me if I study abroad?

Many students with disabilities from across the US choose to take advantage of study abroad opportunities. To make the transition a success, there are a few things to keep in mind when preparing for your travels. Most importantly, legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are federal laws that do not generally extend beyond US borders. This means you may want to research supports and resources that will be available to you prior to heading to your destination. Your LDC and study abroad program are great places to start when thinking through how to navigate accommodations during study abroad.

US based health insurance plans may not cover out of country medical expenses, so it is important to consider how you will access care in another country. [International SOS](#) provides 24/7 medical, mental health, and security support and evacuation services to eligible Harvard students, staff, faculty, and academics abroad. To expedite assistance, it is vital to register your trip before you leave. Registration is required for all Harvard-related international travel and provides access to helpful resources and alerts.

Additional resources:

[Accessibility Considerations Abroad from Harvard GSS](#)

[Study Abroad —Harvard University Office of International Education](#)

Financial Considerations

Living, learning, and working in the Boston area can be expensive. Sometimes having a disability means even more costs to consider.

I have disability-related expenses. What community resources are available to support those costs?

It depends. Some programs, such as Social Security and ABLE accounts, have been set up through the federal government to support individuals with disabilities with qualified disability-related expenses for things like housing, education, training, transportation, and health and wellness. At the state level, vocational rehabilitation agencies may be a resource for funding and other services. Further, there are many local, state, and national organizations that offer scholarships or other resources to support students with disabilities. [University Disability Resources](#), HLS Accessibility Services, and other students with disabilities can be great sources of information on these topics.

Additional resources:

[ABLE Accounts](#)

[National Disability Institute's Financial Resilience Center](#)

[Massachusetts Office on Disability Financial Assistance and Supports for People with Disabilities](#)

[Massachusetts Alternative Finance Program](#)

Are there scholarships or other financial aid available to HLS students with disabilities?

Students can contact the following offices for information on scholarships and financial aid options:

J.D. Students: [J.D. Student Financial Services \(SFS\)](#)

LLM & SJD Students: [Graduate Program Admissions & Financial Aid](#)

Travel, Transportation and Parking

As an urban campus, parking is limited and we encourage students to take full advantage of other means of transportation such as the shuttle, MBTA, and van service (see below).

Where can I find a map of accessible paths and entrances?

Accessible routes on Harvard's Cambridge/Allston and Longwood, campuses can be found by visiting Harvard's [Campus Accessibility Maps](#).

For information on current construction that may impact roadway and sidewalk access, consult the [Harvard Construction Mitigation](#) website, [City of Cambridge Construction Map](#), or [Longwood Medical Area Construction Updates](#).

What transportation options are available to students with disabilities for getting around on campus?

Transportation options are different on the Longwood Medical Area and on the Cambridge and Allston campuses.

Longwood Medical Area:

The Longwood Medical Area provides information on access to public transportation on [its website](#).

Cambridge/Allston campus:

Harvard's [Shuttle and Van Services](#) include regular fixed-route shuttles for traveling on the Cambridge and Allston campuses. Each vehicle is air conditioned and equipped with ramps and foldable seats to accommodate wheelchairs or other mobility devices. For more information including routes and schedules, please visit [Harvard's Shuttle and Van Services](#) website.

Harvard's [Daytime Van](#) is designed for people who, because of disability or a medical condition, cannot use the regular fully accessible shuttle bus. The service operates year-round, except for designated holidays, throughout the Cambridge and Allston campuses. Contact HLS Accessibility Services to request access to the Daytime Van. The service operates from 8:00 AM until 7:00 PM Monday through Friday, and 12:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, with reduced hours during the summer months and recess periods. Students with concerns about Daytime Van service should notify HLS Accessibility Services or raise concerns under the [Harvard University Disability Grievance Policy and Procedure](#).

What accessible parking is available on or near campus?

For those who wish to use a car or van, please be aware that parking options are limited on our urban campus. On campus parking, regardless of disability status, is not free. Students who wish to request close proximity parking accommodations within campus boundaries (i.e. not on city streets) should contact HLS Accessibility Services to initiate a request.

Those who hold a "Disability plate and placard" issued by the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles may park for free at meters or designated placard spaces on city streets throughout the state.

Additional Resources:

[Accessible Parking Map for the City of Cambridge](#)

[Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles Disability Plates and Placards](#)

[Harvard Transportation and Parking](#)

What community resources exist for students with disabilities travelling beyond their home school?

The [M2 shuttle](#) is available for students wishing to travel between Cambridge and Longwood campuses. The shuttle is free to anyone with a Harvard University identification. All shuttles have ramps and folding seats to accommodate wheelchairs or other mobility devices. The M2 is not a door-to-door service so

riders should plan accordingly. Route, schedule and non-HUID rider fee information can be found on the [M2 shuttle](#) website.

The Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) [Ride Program](#) is a door-to-door paratransit service for people who cannot use the subway, bus, or trolley all or some of the time due to temporary or permanent disability. This low-cost option is a shared-ride service for traveling within the parameters of the MBTA. For more information, please visit the [MBTA Ride](#) website.

Additional resources:

[M2 shuttle](#)

[MBTA Mobility Center](#)

[MBTA Schedules and Maps](#)

[Track the T-MBTA Bus Tracker](#)

Housing and Residential Living

[What is the process to request accessible housing in HLS Housing?](#)

Students interested in applying for HLS Housing may fill out an application on the [HLS Housing page](#) when the application becomes available for the upcoming academic year. Students will be able to indicate on their housing application if they plan to request an ADA housing accommodation. If a student indicates they are interested in applying for a housing accommodation, they will receive a Request for Housing Accommodations form via email.

Please note, the housing application and accommodation request are two separate processes; if a student is approved for a housing accommodation, implementation will depend on available inventory.

[What is the process to request accessible housing in Harvard University Housing?](#)

If you decide to reside in [Harvard University Housing \(HUH\)](#), we hope you will feel like Harvard is home. HUH works with HLS Accessibility Services on accessible housing options, including wheelchair accessible units. For more information, students should contact HLS Accessibility Services for accommodations or accessible housing requests. HLS Accessibility Services can help identify what the needs are and HUH will do its best to identify spaces to meet those needs if possible.

Additional Resources:

[Harvard University Housing Accessible Housing and Reasonable Accommodations](#)

[HLS Housing FAQs for Newly Admitted Students](#)

Service Animals and Assistance/Emotional Support Animals

Several terms are used to describe animals that provide help to individuals with disabilities. A first step to determine access rights for your situation is to identify your animal's correct categorization.

What is a service animal?

A service animal is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

What is an assistance animal?

An assistance animal (also referred to as an emotional support animal (ESA), therapy animal or comfort animal), is defined by the Fair Housing Act (FHA) as an animal that provides emotional support or comfort that alleviates one or more symptoms of a person's disability and is necessary for an individual's equal opportunity to access housing. Assistance animals have not been individually trained and they may be a common household animal such as a "dog, cat, small bird, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, other rodent, fish, turtle, or other small, domesticated animal that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes." Reptiles other than turtles are not considered a common household animal under the FHA. Assistance animals are not covered under the ADA.

I am a student with a disability. Can my animal live with me in campus housing?

It depends. Service animals and approved assistance animals may reside in HLS Housing and Harvard University Housing. Regardless of disability, animals that are not service animals or assistance animals are considered pets and the pet policy at your residence should be consulted. You should contact HLS Accessibility Services if you are thinking about bringing a service animal or assistance animal to campus housing.

Students sometimes ask to have more than one assistance animal in Harvard housing. Following the Fair Housing Act, Harvard carefully considers each request for an assistance animal in our residences. It is unusual for multiple animals to be approved to support one individual, because it is unusual for secondary animals to provide additional support that the other animal would be incapable of providing.

As a student with a disability, can I bring my animal to class?

Again, the first step is to determine in which category your animal belongs.

Generally, service animals may travel anywhere on campus, including class. In a few limited instances, service animals may be prohibited from a part of campus if their presence would result in a fundamental alteration. Please note that Harvard has a process to assess and respond to any safety concerns before a service animal enters a research laboratory.

Since assistance animals follow a distinct set of guidelines, they are not permitted to accompany students to classes or other university facilities other than residence halls.

Please consult HLS Accessibility Services for more information on bringing service and assistance animals to campus.

Additional resources:

[University Disability Resources Service and Assistance Animals](#)

[Massachusetts Law about Service Animals](#)

[US Department of Justice Information about Service Animals](#)

[Service Animal Requirements](#)

[US Department of Housing and Urban Development Guidance on Assessing a Person's Request to Have an Animal as a Reasonable Accommodation Under the Fair Housing Act](#)