

Encampment sweeps and reasonable accommodations fillable brochure

Author

Northwest Justice Project

Last Review Date

October 6, 2025

Use this fill in the blank foldable form to ask for reasonable accommodations for an encampment sweep. Print **many** copies to keep with you.

Form attached:

Encampment sweeps and reasonable accommodations fillable brochure

(NJP Housing 692)

WashingtonLawHelp.org gives general information. It is not legal advice. Find organizations that provide free legal help on our [Get legal help](#) page.

ADA Reasonable Accommodation Request

Dear ADA Coordinator,

My name is _____.

I live at the _____
campsite in a _____ (color
& brand) tent near _____.

My disability is _____
_____.

Because of my disability, I need to
keep ☐ medication ☐ a wheelchair
☐ _____
_____.

Because of my disability, I ask for
ADA reasonable accommodations:

☐ time to move by ____/____/____

☐ to keep my personal items.

☐ _____.

Please respond by ____/____/____.

Contact my cell # _____.

Thank you, _____.

Camp Resident

Property List

My property includes:

Instructions

Fill out this Reasonable Accommodation Request and Property List.

Take photos of both the request and list.

Give the request and list to the government official. Ask the official

1. **Where** will you store my property?
2. **How long** will you store my property?
3. **Who** do I contact to get my property?

Scan the QR code
to learn more



Know Your Rights

Encampment Sweeps & the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Name _____

Phone # _____

Get Legal Help:

Call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am and 12:15 pm



Northwest Justice Project

WashingtonLawHelp.org

Created in partnership with the
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund dredf.org

What is a sweep?

A “Sweep” is when government officials forcibly remove an encampment of unhoused people. During a sweep, the officials may remove tents, bedding, belongings, other items and structures from the encampment.

People should not be arrested for sleeping outside if they have nowhere to go, but it can happen. Government officials may also make people move.

If you have a disability, you can ask for a reasonable accommodation for more time to move or for other accommodations you may need.

Officials must give notice before a sweep. Usually, notices are for 3 or more days before a sweep for people to prepare.

Police may arrest people for obstructing them or stopping them from entering the encampment. In many cities, camping on public property is a misdemeanor crime.

You have the right to remain silent and the right to a lawyer (public defender) if you are arrested.

Government officials should offer to store belongings gathered in a sweep, except for hazardous materials, debris or trash.

But often people's belongings are taken or destroyed even when it is obviously not trash.

How to prepare for a sweep

Before the sweep:

- ☐ Move as much of your belongings as possible
- ☐ Make a Property List (see other side).
- ☐ Take a photo of the list.
- ☐ Take photos of your property.

Ask the officials for:

- ☐ Referrals for services.
- ☐ More information about what is going to happen
- ☐ How/where your property will be stored.
- ☐ How long your property will be stored.
- ☐ Who to contact about your property.

If you have a disability that affects your ability to prepare for the sweep in time, you can ask for an ADA Reasonable Accommodation. (Use the form on the back.)

An encampment sweep is a service of the local government and so it is covered under the ADA. This means that the government has a responsibility to give you the reasonable accommodations you request. These are some examples of the types of accommodations you can ask for:

- More time to move
- Help with moving your items and camp
- Changes in the way things are moved
- Special care for medical equipment and medication
- Allowing you to keep your items instead of storing them
- Allowing you to stay in place near a hospital, treatment center, family, etc.

How to make an ADA Request

ADA reasonable accommodation Requests can be verbal or in writing, **but writing is best.** Make the request **as soon as you can** if possible. But you can still make the request at any time including during the sweep itself.

Include this information in your request:

1. Your name
2. How to contact you (phone, email, location of tent, friend's phone).
3. Say that you are a person with a disability. You don't need to tell your exact diagnosis.
4. Describe the accommodation(s) you need.
5. Describe how your disability and the accommodation(s) are connected.
6. Give a specific date that you need a response by.

Tips when making the request:

- Keep records of your accommodation request. Keep all emails, writings, names of witnesses, etc.
- Write down who you made the request to and who responded.
- Post your request on your tent or other visible place in the encampment.
- Make the request as soon as you know an accommodation is needed!

Be specific in your requests. Give specific dates and examples of the help you need.

For example:

Don't say : “I need time to move my camp.”

Do say: “I need until December 3rd at 5pm to move my camp.”

What if shelter options don't work for me and my disabilities? Describe in detail why the shelter or its policies don't meet your needs or would cause you harm. You don't need to make the request yourself. Someone can help you or can make the request for you.