# **Reasonable Accommodations Capital Reserve Account (RACRA) Frequently Asked Questions**

## What is the Reasonable Accommodation Capital Reserve Account (RACRA)?

The Reasonable Accommodation Capital Reserve Account (RACRA) is a capital allocation established within the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (A&F). The Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) and A&F work together to distribute RACRA funds to **eligible state agencies** to help pay for **certain reasonable accommodations** requested by their employees.

Some employees with disabilities may request a **reasonable accommodation** to do their work. A reasonable accommodation is an adjustment or alteration to the workplace that allows an employee with a disability to perform their job. Examples of reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to, providing assistive technology, such as a talking clock or CCTV.

## Who can apply for RACRA funds?

Executive Branch Agencies, Independent Agencies of the Executive Branch, and Constitutional Officers of the Executive Branch are eligible to apply for RACRA funds.

## What expenses are eligible for RACRA funds?

Expenses are eligible for RACRA funds if they meet all three of these criteria:

1. The expense is for an approved **reasonable accommodation** requested by an employee of an **eligible agency**,
2. The expense is a **capital expense** needed to provide a reasonable accommodation, and
3. The expense would create a **financial hardship** for the agency without the help of RACRA funds.

A **capital expense** is an expense to buy, maintain, or improve tangible materials or resources that will last more than one fiscal year. Examples of capital expenses include furniture, CCTVs, sound loops, talking clocks, or door paddles. Capital expenses do not include annual software licenses.

Operating expenses, such as salaries, monthly subscriptions, and ASL interpretation services are **not** eligible to receive RACRA funds.

An agency may demonstrate **financial hardship** two ways: either (1) by establishing that the specific reasonable accommodation exceeds $2,500 OR (2) by identifying that the agency has already spent more than 0.5% of its annual operating budget on reasonable accommodations for the fiscal year.

For example, for an agency with a budget of $1 million, expenses would be eligible if they exceed $2,500 OR if the agency has already spent more than $5,000 on reasonable accommodations (including non-capital expenses, such as ASL interpretation services) for the fiscal year.

For purposes of demonstrating financial hardship, any type of reasonable accommodation expense, including operating expenses, are included in calculating the amount spent to date on reasonable accommodations.

A **full list of guidelines** is available on our website.

## What if my expense is less than $2,500?

If an employee has requested a reasonable accommodation costing less than $2,500, there are two ways you may still be eligible to receive RACRA funds:

1. If the total cost of reasonable accommodations meets or exceeds $2,500 (you can “bundle” expenses together in a single application to add up to $2,500 or more)
2. If your agency has already spent 0.5% or more of its annual operating budget on **any type** of reasonable accommodation requests (including operating expenses such as ASL interpreters), the expense may still be eligible for RACRA funds.

## How do I apply for RACRA funds?

The deadline to apply for RACRA is May 1. To apply:

1. Visit our website and **fill out the application**
2. Email your application to mod-racra@mass.gov

## What happens once I apply for RACRA funds?

Someone at MOD will review your application. If your expenses meet our eligibility criteria, MOD will send your application to A&F for final approval. Once approved, A&F will reach out to your agency’s finance department to initiate the ISA process. MOD will send you a copy of the signed approved application form for your records.

## What if I have more questions?

If you have questions about RACRA and your agency or expense eligibility, please contact Julia O’Leary, MOD’s General Counsel at 857-214-1081 or mod-racra@mass.gov