



Workplace Accommodations for Intellectual Disabilities

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**JAN is a service of the U.S. Department of Labor's
Office of Disability Employment Policy.**

Workplace Accommodations



- Established in 1983 as a national, free service.
- Specialize in job accommodations and the employment provisions of the ADA.
- Assist with the interactive process.
- Give targeted technical assistance.
- Provide comprehensive resources.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Communicate via telephone, chat, text, TTY, relay, email, Skype, and social networks.
- Offer live and archived training.
- Work as a partner in making model employers.

Workplace Accommodations



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JAN Job Accommodation Network

A to Z | ADA Library | Accommodation Search | Publications | Training | Resources

Have questions about workplace accommodations?
Ask us. We can help.

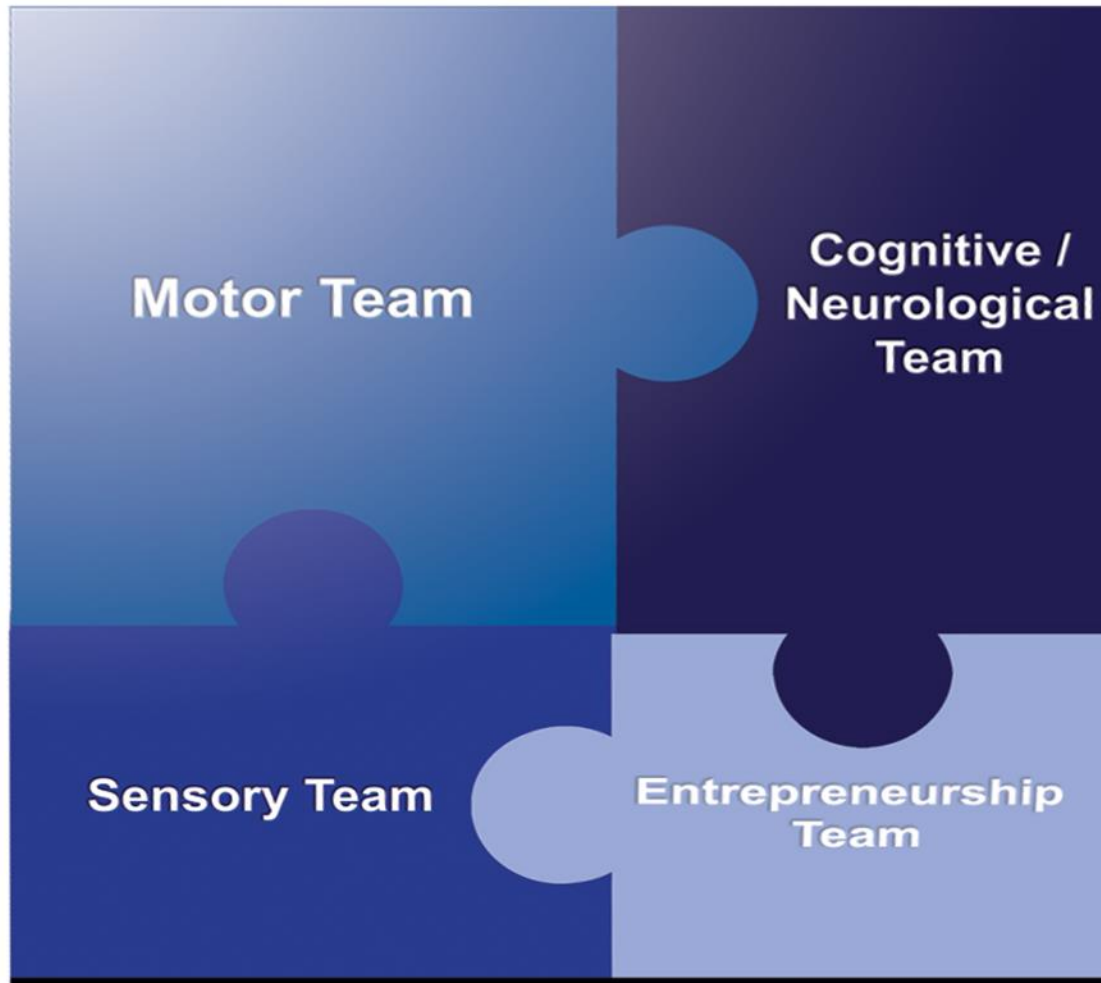
Live Chat
+
Show Reader

A to Z of Disabilities and Accommodations

- Select a Category - | - Select a... - | Go

First, select an option from the Categories list.

Workplace Accommodations



Reasonable Accommodations

Modifications or Changes:

- to a job application process
- to the work environment or to the manner in which the position is customarily performed that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the position
- that enable an employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities

Disclosure



Workplace Accommodations



Disclosure is when you give out specific, personal information about your disability.

Important to provide:

- 1) The nature of the disability
- 2) The limitations, or how the disability affects your capacity to learn and/or perform the job effectively
- 3) Accommodations you will need in order to do the job

Why Disclose?

- To ask for job accommodations
- To receive benefits or privileges of employment
- To explain an unusual circumstance

Unusual Circumstances:

Lovey has a fear of dogs.

Arlo has MS and may slur his words when his symptoms are exacerbated.

Dixon has difficulty regulating body temperature.

How to Disclose?

The individual must let the employer know:

- An adjustment or change at work is needed for a reason related to a medical condition

To request accommodation, an individual:

- May use “plain English”
- Need not mention the ADA
- Need not use the phrase “reasonable accommodation”

Who to Disclose to?

Verbally or in writing, tell the...

- Employer
- Supervisor
- Staff member
- HR representative, or
- Other appropriate person

Documenting a Disability

- when the disability is **NOT** obvious
- when the need for accommodation is **NOT** obvious



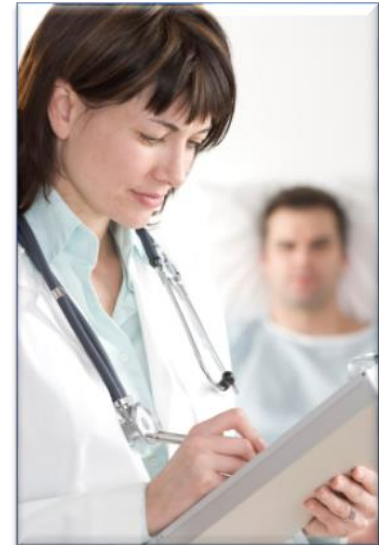
Documenting a Disability

- **Diagnosed impairment**
- **Major life activity substantially limited by the impairment:**
 - caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.
 - major bodily functions, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Documenting a Disability

Documentation comes from appropriate professionals:

- Medical doctors
- Psychiatrists and psychologists
- Nurses
- Physical or occupational therapists
- Speech therapists
- Vocational rehabilitation professionals
- Licensed mental health professionals
- Educational professionals



Reasons Not to Disclose Upfront

- Unknown needs
- Not required under ADA
- Bad previous experience
- Uninformed about the ADA rights



Workplace Accommodations



The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities

www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/411.html



Information about ODEP can be found at
www.dol.gov/odep/

Performance and Conduct



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Performance

Example: A janitorial employee had difficulty organizing her supplies and remembering what to do differently in various areas.



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Solution: The employer color-coded the rooms and the lists of needed supplies for each of the different areas. The employee was also provided a color-coded flip chart for the varied tasks.



Conduct

Example: Susan is written up after several verbal warnings for inappropriate conduct, placed on a thirty-day plan of improvement, and warned that if the behavior doesn't stop within the stated time period she will be let go. She discloses her disability and asks for accommodations to assist her in responding more appropriately to co-workers.

Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer puts the plan of improvement on hold until they receive medical documentation and can put accommodations into place but does not rescind the discipline that occurred before the disability was known. Once accommodations are put into place, the employer starts the PIP.

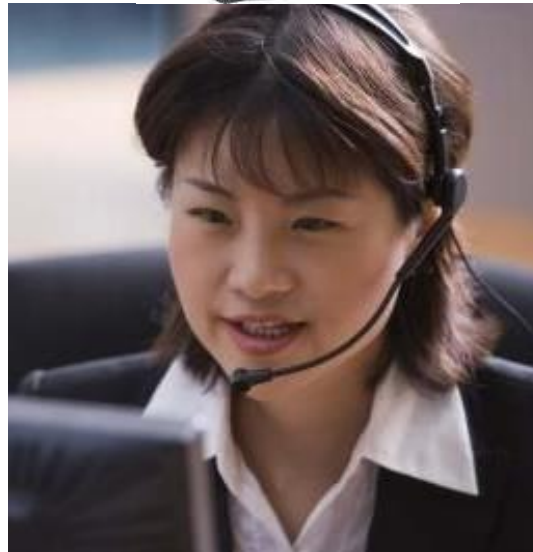


OPTIONS: Job Accommodations

Practical Solutions • Workplace Success

Workplace Accommodations

Purchasing or Modifying Equipment or Products



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A mail clerk had difficulty remembering to go for his second mail collection run when he was involved in other tasks.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The mail clerk was provided with a watch that had a timer set for when he needed to start his run. The watch vibrated to alert him it was time to go.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An activities aide in an extended living facility had difficulty writing documentation in the daily log for the groups she assisted.

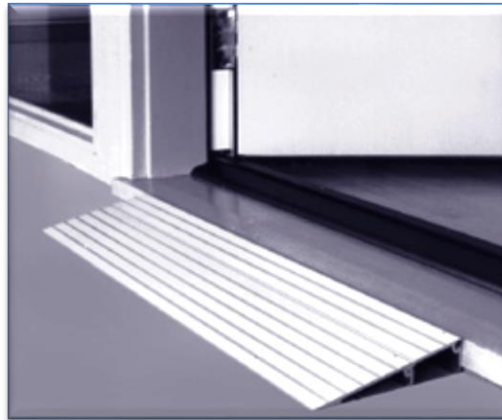


Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The aide was provided speech-to-text software that allowed her to dictate her notes, print them out, and then place them in the log/binder.



Making Work-sites Accessible



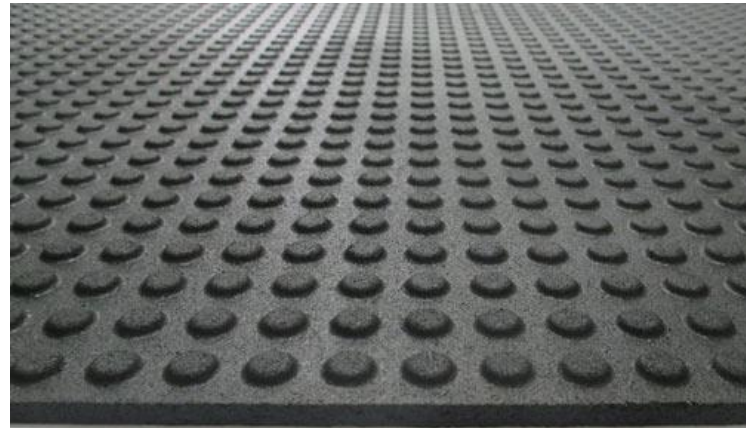
Workplace Accommodations

Example: Sally is having increasing difficulty with slipping and falling while getting on and off her scooter at various points, including the restroom, lunchroom, and mail room.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: Sally's employer provided anti-skid rubber floor mats at the various locations where she gets on and off her scooter to help avoid the falls.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A parts sorter in a distribution center had difficulty standing for his shift with only a thirty-minute lunch and short afternoon break. His work became sloppy in the afternoons due to his fatigue.



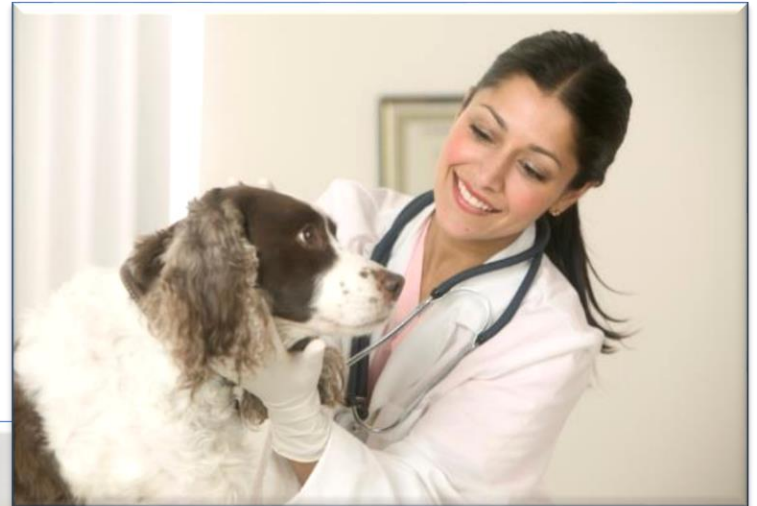
Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employee was provided with a both an anti-fatigue mat to help his back and legs and a stand/lean stool that allowed him the ability to work in an upright position while his weight rested on the padded seat.



Workplace Accommodations

Job Restructuring



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An employee with seizures and a member of a cleaning crew is restricted from working on a ladder. He can perform all of the functions of his job except for the task of maintaining the overhead lighting fixtures.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The job tasks of a second crew member include cleaning a small kitchen in the employee's lounge, which is a task the first crew member can perform. The employer switched these specific tasks performed by the two crew members.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An employer required that all employees work overtime. An employee with Down syndrome asked to be excused from overtime because of fatigue and exacerbation of symptoms.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer denied the request stating that overtime is an essential function. But wait! The process doesn't end there!!



Modifying Schedule and Allowing Leave Time



Workplace Accommodations



Example: A job coach called JAN advocating for an applicant with a disability. A job offer was made, but the schedule included unpredictable days and times. The applicant relied on public transportation to commute.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: A consultant at JAN suggested asking for a schedule modification, specifically one that was consistent. This accommodation enabled the new hire to use the bus system to get to work on time.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A stock clerk who takes public transportation is having difficulty finding her way to the bus stop and back home since moving to a new neighborhood. She has been late to work, and the extension of her hours due to the winter holidays has compounded the problem of finding her way home now that it is dark earlier.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer modified the employee's hours temporarily for two weeks. She was given a flexible starting time and an earlier release so that she would be able to get home during daylight hours to find her way in her new surroundings.



Modifying Policies



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A newly hired dog groomer at a large pet store felt she could perform the essential functions of the job with no problems. The employer's policy only allowed a limited time for training. Due to short-term memory deficit, this employee had difficulty moving through the modules at the pace the employer had scheduled.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: She was accommodated with extended training and a more relaxed schedule for completion of the training. She was provided extra time with a trainer as well as materials to take home to study and an extended time frame for completion of each module.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An employee who had difficulty with time management skills asked to use his phone and the apps he was accustomed to in order to help him stay on task.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer modified their “no cell phone use” policy and allowed this one employee to use the apps that would assist him in getting his work done in a timely manner.



Providing Readers, Interpreters, and Coaches



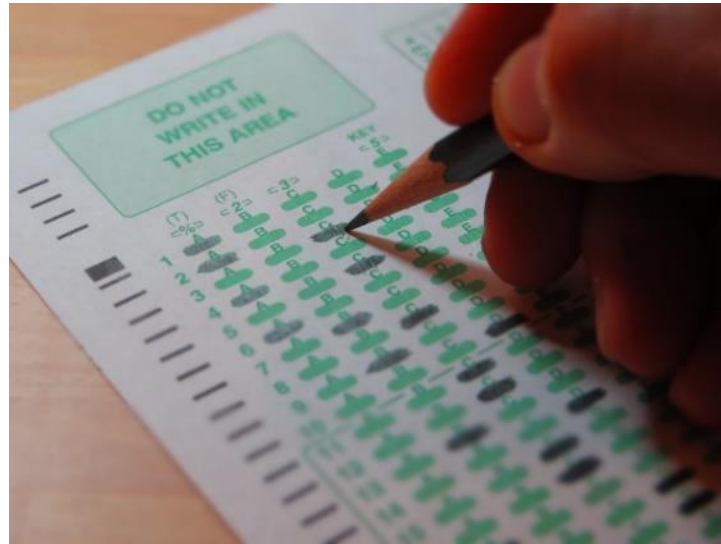
Workplace Accommodations

Example: A job applicant for a dog warden position in city government had difficulty reading and could not pass a required written test.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer provided a reader for the testing as an accommodation.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A new employee who had passed the probationary period with flying colors was now experiencing the gradual withdrawal of the job coach who had been instrumental in the employee's success. The supervisor was seeing a few issues resurface.



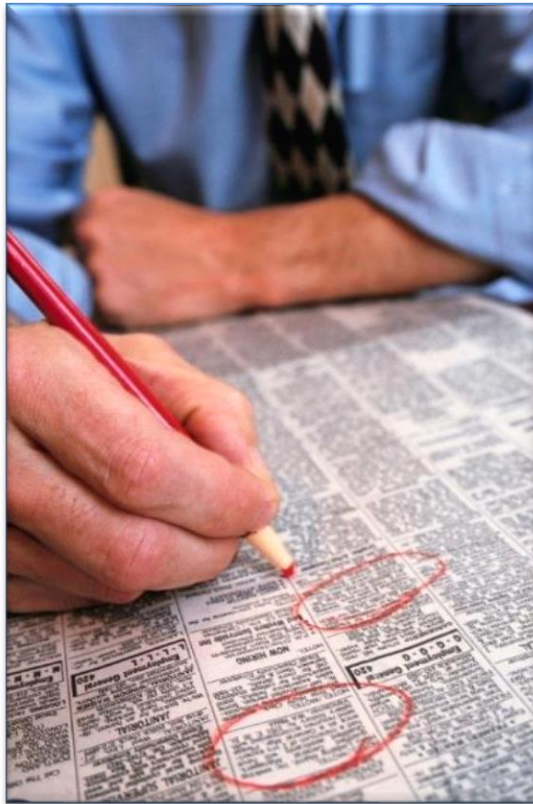
Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer recruited a co-worker who had formed a positive relationship with the new employee to function as a natural support to the employee after the job coach was gone, providing the same type of support.



Workplace Accommodations

Reassignment



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A cashier encountered extreme difficulty counting back change accurately after the automatic change counter was removed.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: When no effective accommodation could be provided, the employee was reassigned to a deli position where she would not have to handle money.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An employee who delivered meals locally asked for a change in position when the kitchen where the meals were prepared was being remodeled. The temporary kitchen was located in the city, where he was unable to drive.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The driver was accommodated with a reassignment to a painting/light construction crew that was helping with the renovations at the kitchen. Since he would only be required to drive to the center where the kitchen was located, the driver was able to continue working with no problems.



Additional Accommodation Examples

Workplace Accommodations

Example: A janitorial employee is unable to write well and accurately document the work she completed because the form the employer required her to use necessitated writing out the tasks she completed. Her documentation made it appear as if she did nothing during her shift.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employer accommodated the employee by making a change to the form she used so that she had the same opportunity as others to document the work she completed. Her form included pictures of the tasks that only required her to check off each one as it was completed.



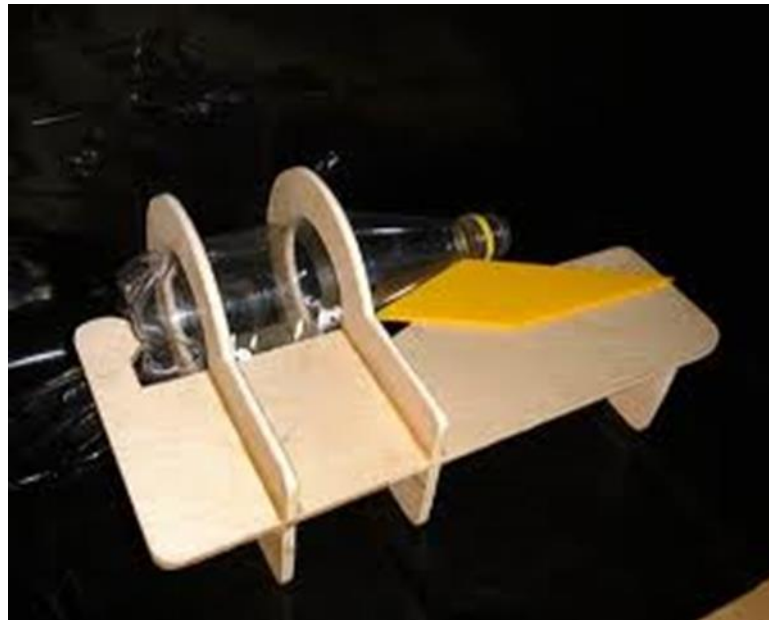
Workplace Accommodations

Example: A production worker had difficulty grasping a plastic bottle to accurately apply an adhesive label.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: JAN suggested making a wooden jig, which secured the bottle, allowing the employee to use both hands when applying the label.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A maintenance worker had difficulty reading commonly called phone numbers from a chart then dialing the numbers correctly.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employee was provided a large-button phone that allowed for photos to be inserted in place of the numbers. The phone numbers were programmed in, so the employee only had to press the button with the photo of the person he was calling for the call to go through.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: A physical laborer with major depression experienced extreme fatigue during the afternoon, which affected her performance.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employee was accommodated with flexible breaks and ergonomic tools.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An employee with epilepsy began having seizures and was undergoing medical treatment. Her doctor stated she was safe to work if precautions were put into place.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: The employee and her doctor compiled a plan of action so the staff member and a few close coworkers would know exactly what to do if she were to have another seizure at work.



Workplace Accommodations

Example: An electrician's helper with memory problems needed to listen to and follow multi-step directions given orally. He had difficulty taking effective notes and remembering information he heard verbally.



Workplace Accommodations

Solution: He was provided an iPad with apps that would record the directions. This enabled him to listen to the directions as many times as he needed.



Questions?



Workplace Accommodations



Contact

- (800)526-7234 (V) & (877)781-9403 (TTY)
- AskJAN.org & jan@askjan.org
- (304)216-8189 via Text
- janconsultants via Skype

