



Job Accommodation Information

Section Purpose

Provide information for One-Stop staff to assist customers with disabilities in identifying and obtaining accommodations for employment success. This information can also be useful to One-Stop Systems in employing staff with disabilities.

Section Contents

- A) **Job Accommodation: An Overview:** General discussion of job accommodations including definitions, guidelines for the process of identifying and obtaining accommodations, and legal issues pertaining to job accommodation
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- C) **Job Accommodations—Where to Get Help:** A listing of resources and organizations available to assist in identifying job accommodations and appropriate assistive technology
- D) **Job Accommodation Examples:** A comprehensive listing, organized by type of disability, of various accommodations that have been used in the workplace
- E) **JAN: Opening Doors to Job Accommodation:** A description of the services available from the Job Accommodation Network, a free service which can assist in the identification of accommodations

Job Accommodations: An Overview

Developing accommodations and supports is an integral part of assisting people with disabilities to find employment. Successful job development involves fitting the job to the person as much as fitting the person to the job. One-Stop staff who work with people with disabilities need a basic knowledge of the legal and practical matters concerning reasonable accommodations in employment.

What is job accommodation?

“Job accommodation” means modifying a job, job site, or way in which a job is done so that the person with a disability can have equal access to all aspects of work. It can make it possible for people with disabilities to:

- apply for jobs
- perform essential job functions
- be as productive as their co-workers
- accomplish tasks with greater ease or independence.

Job accommodations can also allow people with disabilities to enjoy the same “perks” that their co-workers enjoy, such as access to the employee cafeteria or use of company-provided transportation.

What is an assistive technology device?

An assistive technology device is a tangible item, device, or piece of equipment that enables a person with a disability to perform a task, or increase or improve their performance on a task. Assistive technology can range from relatively simple, inexpensive, “low tech” items from a retail store (hardware, office supply, and electronics stores have an abundance of assistive technology) to highly sophisticated technology such as specialized computer equipment and mechanical devices from specialized vendors. Assistive technology devices are often used as job accommodations.

What are essential functions and how are they determined?

“Essential functions” are the basic duties that an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation. Factors to consider in determining if a function is essential include:

- does the position exist to perform that function? (e.g., a cashier exists to exchange money with customers)
- what will the consequences be if this employee is not required to perform the function?
- how many other employees are available to perform the function?
- how much time have present or past employees spent performing this function?
- the written job description
- what has been the actual work experience of present or past employees in this job?
- what degree of expertise or skill is required to perform the function?
- terms of a collective bargaining agreement, if applicable.

What are the steps involved in developing job accommodations?

- 1) Identify accommodation needs: The first step is identifying the areas of a job (tasks, job functions, etc.) that a person with a disability cannot fully perform without some type of accommodation.
- 2) Identify accommodation: The next step is identifying the actual modification that will solve the problem. This can sometimes be fairly simple and straightforward, with obvious solutions. Other times, this step requires extensive investigation and outside assistance.
 - Begin by discussing options with the applicant or employee. Frequently, the appropriate accommodation is obvious. The individual may suggest an accommodation based upon his/her own life or work experience. Assuming that it is reasonable, it is then simply a matter of arranging for the accommodation.
 - If this consultation does not identify an appropriate accommodation, an employer may need to analyze the job and workplace more thoroughly, and research accommodation options. An employer may choose to do such an analysis independently, or may wish to bring in outside expertise. The state Vocational Rehabilitation agency (a One-Stop partner) and organizations that represent or assist individuals with disabilities may be helpful. In addition, a number of organizations provide free consultation service on accommodations (see resource list at the end of this section).
 - Through the course of an analysis, be sure to consider all six categories of types of accommodations (listed on page 147).
 - A comprehensive, systematized approach to identifying accommodations is *Job Accommodation System*, available from the Institute for Community Inclusion (see resource section).

Who pays for accommodations?

If the accommodation meets the criteria for a “reasonable accommodation” under the Americans with Disabilities Act (see below), the employer must pay for any costs involved. However, there may be cases where the accommodation is not considered a reasonable accommodation, or where it does not make practical sense for the employer to pay for equipment or assistive technology.

One consideration is ownership of equipment. If the employer pays for a piece of equipment or assistive technology as a reasonable accommodation, the employer owns it, and the individual with a disability may not be able to use it at home or take it to their next job. If the equipment is useful or necessary in a variety of settings, the person with a disability may wish to purchase it themselves, even if it would be reasonable for the employer to pay.

Further information on funding considerations and resources is contained elsewhere in this section.

What are an employer’s responsibilities for providing job accommodations?

Employers must provide accommodations, and pay any costs involved, to any qualified job applicant or employee if the accommodation is considered “reasonable” under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A reasonable accommodation is one which does not pose an “undue hardship” on an employer.

When is an accommodation considered an undue hardship for an employer?

“Undue hardship” means that an accommodation would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial, or disruptive, or would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of a business. Among the factors considered:

- the nature and cost of the accommodation
- the resources and size of the business
- the type of business, including the composition, functions, and structure of the workforce
- the impact the accommodation would have on the facility and business as a whole.

If an accommodation is considered to be an undue hardship, the employer must attempt to find an alternate solution (see below).

Who decides whether or not an accommodation would pose an undue hardship?

The decision concerning whether an accommodation poses an undue hardship is made by the employer, taking into account the factors listed above. However, employers cannot simply state that will not provide an accommodation, without some type of negotiation and discussion with the applicant or employee. ADA regulations require that employers engage in an interactive process with individuals with disabilities in response to a request for reasonable accommodation.

What alternatives must an employer explore if an accommodation poses an undue hardship?

- If a particular accommodation would be an undue hardship, an employer must try to identify another accommodation that would not pose such a hardship.
- If cost causes an accommodation to be judged an undue hardship, an employer must consider whether an outside source, such as a Vocational Rehabilitation agency or tax credit, can offset the cost. Consult the piece on “Funding Assistive Technology & Accommodations” for information on state and federal tax credits and deductions.
- The employer must also give the applicant or employee the opportunity to provide the accommodation or pay for the portion of the accommodation that is considered to be excessively expensive.

Who is responsible for requesting an accommodation?

The employee with a disability is responsible for requesting an accommodation.

Who is responsible for identifying an appropriate accommodation?

Ultimately, the employer is responsible. Once a person with a disability has made a request for a reasonable accommodation, the employer must make a reasonable effort to identify a specific solution.

When can an accommodation be requested?

A job accommodation may be requested by the employee with a disability

- during the job application process
- after a job offer is made, or
- at any time during the course of employment.

Employers are specifically prohibited by Title I of the ADA from asking job applicants about the presence of a disability. However, the employer may ask if the individual can perform specific job responsibilities and/or how the person would go about accomplishing those tasks, with or without an accommodation.

- In particular, if an individual's disability is readily apparent (e.g., an individual uses a wheelchair), the employer may ask how the individual will perform specific job tasks which the employer perceives as potentially problematic given the nature of the individual's disability.
- Once an individual has requested an accommodation, an employer can ask for more specific information concerning the nature of an individual's disability.

When is it best to request an accommodation?

Requesting accommodations requires some level of disclosure concerning disability, and as with any issue related to disclosure, a number of variables must be considered.

- Will the accommodation be needed during the interview/hiring process?
- Is the accommodation needed immediately to perform job duties?
- What will be the impact of making the request:
 - ♦ before hiring?
 - ♦ immediately after?
 - ♦ after one or more months of employment?

As always with disclosure issues, the job seeker's wishes should be absolutely adhered to. However, as career counselors, One-Stop staff should help guide the job seeker through the decision-making process, with consideration of the implications of disclosure and non-disclosure. *For more information on disclosure, see section 7.*

Is it always a good idea to wait until the hiring process has been completed, and leave it up to the employer to identify the accommodation?

The law is clear: once a request has been made, it is the employer's legal responsibility to identify a reasonable accommodation. However, practical realities may call for a different approach.

- Accommodation needed for application process - Given the subjective nature of the hiring process, if the individual needs an accommodation to apply for a position, it's probably best to avoid approaching the employer with the attitude, "You need to find me an accommodation so that I can apply for this job." Applicants can actually take the accommodation process as an opportunity to demonstrate their competence. It creates a positive impression when job applicants have a clear idea of what types of accommodations they need and how these can be arranged.
 - ♦ Such accommodations can be simple (an accessible office, materials in Braille) or more involved (a short-term job try-out in lieu of or in addition to the traditional hiring routine of application, interview, and testing).
 - ♦ When asking for such accommodations, the job applicant should clarify to the employer how the accommodation(s) will allow the employer to give the applicant equal consideration.
- Identification of reasonable accommodation needed for a positive hiring decision - For everyone, part of the hiring process is convincing an employer that they can perform the tasks of a job. Again, remember that hiring is a subjective process, based on the perceptions and impressions of the employer.

- ♦ Better: “I can do this job and here’s how I can do it (via the accommodation which I’ve identified).”
- ♦ Worse: “I can do this job, but you’ll have to figure out how (by finding me an accommodation).”
- Need for training on assistive technology - If the accommodation consists of a piece of equipment that requires some training (e.g., a voice activated computer), a person with a disability may need to receive training prior to applying, in order to demonstrate their competence. As in the previous point, the job applicant increases the chances of being hired when they can demonstrate that they have not only identified an accommodation, but are trained on how to use it.

What is the best approach for job seekers when seeking accommodations with employers?

Accommodations are best developed in a spirit of cooperation, not conflict, with employers. Remember, positive relationships with employers are necessary for long-term success. Approach the process as a joint problem-solving exercise with many possible solutions. However, if circumstances warrant it, job seekers and One-Stop staff should not hesitate to gently remind employers that providing reasonable accommodations is not a “favor” to the potential employee, but something that the law requires.

When requesting accommodations from an employer, it is helpful to consider that employers actually accommodate the needs of all workers through the provisions of desks, chairs, work tools, supplies, etc. These “accommodations” enable employees to perform the tasks of their job and/or to perform them more efficiently. When a person with a disability requests accommodations, he/she is not asking for anything more than what the employer provides to all other employees - the “tools” to effectively perform the job.

What are the job applicant’s or employee’s options if an employer refuses to provide a reasonable accommodation?

If ultimately an employer will not provide an accommodation, even after negotiation and advocacy, the job applicant or employee should determine specifically why the employer is unable to provide the accommodation, and which factors are causing the accommodation to pose an “undue hardship”. If the job applicant or employee disagrees with the employer’s opinion that the accommodation poses an undue hardship, the following steps can be taken:

- Consultation with legal advocacy organizations to get a professional opinion on the matter (a listing of such organizations is in the resource section at the back of this manual under Americans with Disabilities Act and Other Legal Information). Discussing situations with legal experts can help in determining whether the employer is truly meeting their legal obligations.
- If it appears that the employer has not met their legal obligation to provide reasonable accommodations, the job applicant or employee may wish to determine possible options for legal action, including filing a complaint with the EEOC or state anti-discrimination board. The EEOC has mediation services available which may be able to assist in reaching a solution. [Additional information on filing complaints and mediation is contained in section 8 - “ADA and Employment”]. Obviously, taking legal action should only be pursued in the rare instances where all other options for reaching a mutually satisfactory solution have been exhausted.

Job Accommodation Categories

Accommodations are often thought of as physical equipment or modifications. However, accommodations can include a wide range of non-physical modifications. It is helpful to consider these six categories (specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act) with the employer and employee when discussing how to resolve task barriers. Examples of specific job accommodations are listed elsewhere in this section.

TYPE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Job Restructuring	Adjustments to work procedures or to the order in which tasks are usually performed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change work schedule • Rearrange the order in which tasks are done • Decrease number of non-essential job duties
Assistive Device	Objects that help an employee do the job or complete tasks with greater ease or independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical reacher • Electric stapler • Magnifying lens • Non-skid material/surface • Voice-activated computer
Training	Teaching methods that help an employee to learn or re-learn job duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a map to orient new employees • Supply large print instructions • Demonstrate a different way to perform a task
Personal Assistant	Person who helps an employee with job duties, work routines, or work-related aspects of a job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreter assists with communication • Co-worker helps with a task • Mentor provides training or support
Building Modification	Alterations to the physical environment that allow safe and equal access to facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lever to turn round door knob • Raised letters on elevators and signs • Flashing lights on fire alarms and telephones
Job Reassignment	Temporary or permanent task transfers between co-workers or sharing jobs with other employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap task with co-worker • Job share with co-worker • Reassign task to another employee

Publication Resources & References

Information on accommodations is taken in part from:

Roberts, G., Zimbrich, K., Butterworth, J., Hart, D. (1993). *Job Accommodation System*. Institute for Community Inclusion, Boston

Job Accommodation System is a comprehensive guide to the decision making process in developing job accommodations for people with disabilities. Copies of this guide are available by contacting the ICI: (617) 355-6506; TTY: (617) 355-6956; ici@tch.harvard.edu; www.childrenshospital.org/ici

Information in this section on the legal aspects of reasonable accommodations is based in part on material from the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission booklet "The ADA: Your Responsibilities as an Employer," available at: www.eeoc.gov/facts/ada17.html

Funding Assistive Technology and Accommodations

There are a variety of options available for funding assistive technology, equipment, and accommodations needed to perform job tasks. One-Stop staff assistance can range from limited guidance, to extensive involvement in arranging for funding and will depend on:

- the level of services being provided to the individual;
- the complexity of the individual's situation; and
- the time available to obtain funding.

Funding by the Employer

The first option that should be considered is the employer. Employers are required to pay for assistive technology, equipment, and other accommodations, if the request meets the criteria for a "reasonable accommodation" under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A lengthy discussion about whether an accommodation is "reasonable" may not be necessary if employers see the cost of an accommodation as simply part of the investment needed to ensure a productive employee. Employers' costs can be offset by:

ADA Small Business Tax Credit:

Businesses with 30 or fewer employees or \$1,000,000 or less per year in total revenue can receive a tax credit for the cost of accommodations provided to an employee (or customer) with a disability. This credit covers 50% of eligible expenditures up to \$10,000 (maximum credit per year of \$5000). For additional information, contact the Internal Revenue Service.

- Web site: www.irs.ustreas.gov
- Voice: 800-829-1040; TDD: (800) 829-4059
- Publications (request publications 535 and 334 which cover ADA deductions & credits)
Voice: (800) 829-3676; TDD: (800) 829-4059

WOTC & WtW Tax Credits:

Although not directly connected to accommodations, any employer can use these tax credits to help offset costs of assistive technology, equipment, or accommodations for a person with a disability.

- **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** - WOTC is available to employers for hiring individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Employers can receive a tax credit of up to \$2,400 per individual hired. Many people with disabilities meet the criteria for WOTC, including all recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and all clients of state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies.
- **Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit** - If a person with a disability is a recipient of Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) at the time of hire, the employer can receive a federal tax credit for up to \$8,500 per individual hired.

Additional information on these tax credits can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor: <http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/employ/updates.asp>. WOTC state and regional contacts can be found at: <http://wdr.doleta.gov/contacts>

WOTC and WtW tax credit request forms and state contact information can also be obtained by calling (877) 828-2050 (a toll-free number). This Fax-On-Demand service allows access to WOTC/WtW request forms via Fax by using a touch-tone telephone or a fax machine. Up to two documents may be requested per call. Once you call this service, simply follow the instructions and enter the document number (listed below) that corresponds to the form or information needed.

- #1 - System Index of Information
- #101 - The Regional Contact Address Directory
- #102 - The State Contact Address Directory
- #103 - IRS Form 8850
- #104 - ETA Form 9061

Non-Employer Options

In some cases, an accommodation may not be considered “reasonable” but may still be necessary or desired. Also, as noted in the “Overview” document, there are circumstances where it does not make practical sense for employers to pay for a “reasonable” accommodation, such as:

- The individual with a disability needs to own a piece of equipment or assistive technology so that he or she can take it with them when changing jobs
- The individual needs to identify, acquire, and possibly be trained on a piece of assistive technology to increase the likelihood of being hired.

The individual may pay for the accommodation out of pocket; however, there are a variety of other non-employer options. Some are fairly straightforward and quick; others require significant investigation and lead time.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The state Vocational Rehabilitation agency (VR) can pay for assistive technology, equipment, or other accommodations for individuals who qualify for VR services. Since VR is a One-Stop partner, it makes sense for One-Stop staff to start by contacting VR to determine if VR can pay or identify other funding options.

Medical Insurance

- Medicare - Medicare may pay for a piece of equipment or assistive technology for insured individuals, if the equipment is deemed medically necessary.
- Medicaid - Similarly, Medicaid may pay for a piece of equipment or modification if it is deemed medically necessary for a Medicaid recipient. The rules governing Medicaid vary from state to state.

Information is available from your local Medicaid and Medicare office (listed in the government pages of the phone book) or by contacting the Health Care Financing Administration (www.hcfa.gov).

- Private Insurance -Private health insurance may cover the cost of assistive technology or equipment. Individuals should review their insurance policies and contact their insurance company to see if such devices are covered.

Social Security Work Incentives

- IRWE - Individuals who receive Social Security disability benefits (Supplemental Security Income - SSI and Social Security Disability Insurance - SSDI) can use an Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) to help offset the cost of assistive technology or work accommodation. It is fairly quick and straightforward to arrange IRWEs.
- PASS - Individuals receiving SSI can use a Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) to offset the entire cost of assistive technology, equipment, or accommodations. PASS's require an application process and typically take approximately 30 to 60 days to be approved. While PASS's are more complicated, PASS Cadres (experts on the PASS program) are available to help.

To find out more, visit the SSA web site at: www.ssa.gov/work and look in the "work incentives" section. Contact information for PASS Cadre's is on the SSA web site. You can also call SSA at (800) 772-1213, to find out who your local PASS Cadre is. See section 9, "Social Security," for more information on IRWE and PASS.

Veterans Affairs

If the individual with a disability is a veteran, or a dependent of a veteran, they may be eligible for funding from the Veteran's Administration (VA). The VA is specifically authorized by law to pay for devices and assistive technology for people with disabilities. Contact your local Veteran's Affairs Office, listed in the government pages of the phone directory, or the national office at (800) 827-1000 or www.va.gov.

Local Service, Charitable, Religious & Civic Organizations

Funding may be available from local organizations. Although it can take some work to identify possible organizations, funding can then sometimes be obtained fairly quickly. Listings are often available from local community guides and phone books. An individual with a disability may belong to such an organization or have a connection (via a relative or neighbor) that can be useful in utilizing this funding resource.

Private Foundations

A wide variety of national, regional, and local private foundations can be sources of funding. Application procedures and application response time vary significantly. Resources and assistance in identifying funding sources is available from:

The Foundation Center
79 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10003
Phone: (212) 620-4230
Fax: (212) 691-1828
e-mail: library@fdncenter.org
Web site: <http://fdncenter.org>

Each state has a resource library on funding, called a "cooperating collection." The list of cooperating collections is available from the Foundation Center.

Funding Sources for Assistive Technology, Equipment, and Accommodations

Funding Source	Comments	For More Information/Contact
Employer	Required to fund only if meets criteria for “reasonable accommodation” under ADA	Employer costs can be offset by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA Small Business Tax Credit- up to \$5,000/yr. Contact IRS via government pages of phone book or www.irs.ustreas.gov • WOTC & WtW Tax Credit– Any employer can receive up to \$2,400/employee from WOTC, and \$8,500/employee from WtW. Contact U.S. Department of Labor via government pages of phone book or at www.doleta.gov/employer/wotc.htm; forms available by calling (877) 828-2050
Vocational Rehabilitation	One-Stop partner; must qualify for VR services	VR contact via One-Stop should be able to help
Medicare	For people who have Medicare health insurance	Contact local Medicare office (government pages of phone book) or HCFA at www.hcfa.gov
Medicaid	For people with Medicaid health insurance. State may have additional guidelines.	Contact local Medicaid office (government pages of phone book) or HCFA at www.hcfa.gov
Private Insurance		Check policy and/or contact carrier
Social Security Work Incentives	<u>IRWE</u> – for people on SSI & SSDI <u>PASS</u> – for people on SSI	Contact local Social Security Administration (SSA) office or call (800) 772-1213 Web site: www.ssa.gov/work
Veteran’s Affairs	For people who are veterans or dependents of veterans	Contact the VA via the government pages of the phone book or at (800) 827-1000; web site: www.va.gov
Local Service, Charitable, Religious, & Civic Organizations	Check to see if individual with disability has connection with such an organization	Local community guides and phone books often have listings of such organizations
Private Foundations	Application procedures and response time vary significantly	The Foundation Center 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003 Tel: (212) 620-4230 Fax: (212) 691-1828 - e-mail: library@fdncenter.org - Web site: http://fdncenter.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each state also has a Foundation Center “cooperating collection”

Job Accommodations: Where to Get Help

Where do I get outside assistance?

In many cases, One-Stop staff will be able to work together with the customer and employer to develop accommodations that enable the individual to succeed on the job. However, there may be times where the complexities of an individual's situation and/or limitations on One-Stop resources warrant bringing in outside assistance. If the Vocational Rehabilitation system, a One-Stop partner, is not already working with this individual, contacting them is a good first step. Additionally, a number of local and national organizations can assist in the accommodation development process.

Resources for information and assistance on accommodations

Local and Regional Resources

State Assistive Technology Projects

Each state has a federally funded assistive technology program. These programs vary in their available information and services; however, they can all help identify local assistive technology ideas and resources. Contact information for each state is available at the following web site: www.resna.org/taproject/at/statecontacts.html

or by calling RESNA:

Voice: (703) 524-6686

TTY: (703) 524-6639

E-mail: resnaTA@resna.org

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs)

Web site: www.adata.org/index-dbtac.html

Voice/TTY: (800) 949-4232 (will connect with your regional DBTAC)

There are 10 federally funded regional DBTACs which provide information to businesses, people with disabilities, and others on accommodation and accessibility issues, as well as other ADA information. A full listing of DBTACs is contained in the resource section under "Americans with Disabilities Act and Other Legal Information."

National Resources

ABLEDATA: The National Database of Assistive Technology Information

8401 Colesville Road, Suite 200

Silver Spring, MD 20910-3319

Voice/TTY: (800) 227-0216 or (301) 608-8998

Web site: www.abledata.com

A federally-funded project whose primary mission is to provide information on assistive technology and rehabilitation equipment. This project's web site contains a database of 25,000 products and devices. ABLEDATA information specialists will also provide in-depth help over the telephone.

Alliance for Technology Access

2175 East Francisco Boulevard, Suite L
San Rafael, CA 94901
Voice: (800) 455-7970 or (415) 455-4575
TTY: (415) 455-0491
E-mail: atainfo@ataccess.org
Web site: www.ataccess.org

ATA is dedicated to increasing the use of standard, assistive, and information technologies for people with disabilities. Has a variety of resources, including a library, to help identify appropriate technology. Publisher of Computer and Web Resources for People with Disabilities, a comprehensive guide.

assistivetech.net

Center for Rehabilitation Technology
College of Architecture
Georgia Institute of Technology
490 10th Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30332-0156
Voice/TTY: (404) 894-4960
Web site: www.assistivetech.net

An online information resource providing up-to-date information on assistive technologies, adaptive environments and community resources. Has a comprehensive listing of assistive technology, and also information specialists available to assist with questions about assistive technology.

Prentke Romich Company

1022 Heyl Road
Wooster, OH 44691
Voice: (800) 262-1984
Fax: (330) 263-4829
Web site: www.prentrom.com

A manufacturer of augmentative communication devices for people with disabilities, Prentke Romich has a guide for funding assistive technology available at its web site.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

West Virginia University
P.O. Box 6080
Morgantown, West Virginia 26506-6080
Accommodation Information (Voice / TTY): (800) 526-7234
ADA Information (Voice / TTY): (800) 232-9675
Fax: (304) 293-5407
E-mail: jan@icdi.wvu.edu
Web site: <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu>

Federally-funded free information and consultation service on job accommodations and related information. JAN's web site has a searchable online database (SOAR) which can be used to research accommodation options. JAN also has consultants available by phone, who can assist in identifying possible accommodations. These consultants have instant access to the most comprehensive and up-to-date information about accommodation methods, devices, and strategies.

National Business & Disability Council

201 I.U. Willets Rd
Albertson, NY 11507
Voice: (516) 465-1515
Information hot line: (516) 465-1519
Fax: (516) 465-3730
Web site: www.business-disability.com

The National Business & Disability Council (NBDC) is a resource for businesses on integration of individuals with disabilities into the workforce. Among the services of NBDC is an information hotline to answer questions on accessibility issues.

RESNA (Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive
Technology Society of North America)

1700 N. Moore Street, Suite 1540
Arlington, VA 22209-1903
Voice: (703) 524-6686
TTY: (703) 524-6639
Fax: (703) 524-6630
E-mail: natloffice@resna.org
Web site: www.resna.org

A membership organization of people who are interested in how technology can help people with disabilities achieve their goals. RESNA has a variety of publications and resources. Web site includes a list of assistive technology professionals by state.

Tech Connections

490 Tenth St. NW
Atlanta, GA 30318
Voice/TTY: (877) TEK-SEEK
(877-835-7335)
Web site: www.techconnections.org
E-mail: techconnections@crt.gatech.edu

Tech Connections is a national dissemination project designed to increase the utilization of existing and emerging assistive technology with a particular focus on employment. Web site has a variety of information and resources. Information and referral specialists are available to answer questions at no charge. Also has a monthly newsletter.

Trace Research & Development Center

S-151 Waisman Center
1500 Highland Avenue
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, WI 53705-2280
Voice: (608) 262-6966
TTY: (608) 262-5408
E-mail: info@trace.wisc.edu
Web site: <http://trace.wisc.edu>

Engineers technological access solutions, and has a variety of information and resources on assistive technology.

Virtual Assistive Technology Center

Web site: www.at-center.com

The purpose of the VATC is to put computers within reach of individuals with disabilities. The web site contains a variety of freeware and shareware that can be downloaded to help people with disabilities use computers. The web site also contains information, publications, a message board, and links to related web sites. VATC also publishes a newsletter on assistive technology.

Additional resources on accommodations are in the resource section of this manual under "Accommodations & Assistive Technology."

Job Accommodation Examples

Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis. They are made as a cooperative effort among the employee with a disability and the employer. Depending on the nature of the services being provided and the preferences of the individual with a disability, One-Stop Center employment counselors may be involved in this process. Other individuals may also be involved such as union representatives, etc.

The main issues to be considered are:

- the job tasks that must be performed
- the functional limitations of the individual
- whether the proposed accommodation(s) will result in undue hardship to the employer.

Accommodations may include specialized equipment, facility modifications, adjustments to work schedules or job duties, as well as a whole range of other creative solutions.

Offered below are examples of accommodations that have been made for qualified workers with disabilities. These are strictly a sampling of accommodations that have been made, and this list is by no means all encompassing concerning possible solutions to accommodation issues.

To receive guidance on specific problems and possible solutions, call the USDOL Office of Disability and Employment Policy's Job Accommodation Network at 800-526-7234, or 800-ADA-WORK (800-232-9675); e-mail: jan@icdi.wvu.edu

web site: <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu>

JAN is a free service.

Mental Retardation

PROBLEM: A cashier with mild mental retardation has difficulty making change.

SOLUTION: The worker uses a talking calculator and a chart of bills and coins. **COST:** \$150

PROBLEM: A greenhouse worker with mental retardation has difficulty correctly mixing various chemicals.

SOLUTION: Measuring cups, a checklist, and the chemicals have been color-coded in a coordinated manner so the person can accomplish tasks by matching colors. **COST:** \$25

Blind/Visual Impairment

PROBLEM: A new restaurant employee who is legally blind uses a service dog to travel to and from work. The employee does not need the dog to perform her job duties.

SOLUTION: A dog crate is placed in a back office with a clear path of travel in and out of the facility. The dog is crated during the work day and is out of any contact with food products or supplies used in the restaurant. **COST:** \$75

PROBLEM: A receptionist who is blind works at a law firm. She cannot see the lights on the phone console which indicate which telephone lines are ringing, on hold, or in use by staff.

SOLUTION: The employer purchases a light-probe, a penlike product which detects a lighted button. **COST:** \$45

PROBLEM: An assembler/operator with a severe vision limitation has the job of wrapping hose-pipe fittings with special tape. This requires close examination of the work materials. Quality of work is very important.

SOLUTION: A total view magnifier on an adjustable swivel base is installed. **COST:** \$450

PROBLEM: A legal department secretary in the cable television industry who is legally blind has to perform such duties as typing, answering telephones, filing and photo-copying.

SOLUTION: The employee is given a specially designed work table to hold a personal computer, a printer and a VTEK (a large print display processor which replaces the smaller standard terminal screen), all of which can be easily accessed. An automatic paper feeder is added to the printer. COST: \$1,360

PROBLEM: A college professor with AIDS is having vision problems associated with the disability. His greatest difficulty is in grading student papers.

SOLUTION: A video magnification system is purchased which facilitated his reading the papers. In addition, students who use the school's word processing system are asked to provide copies of their papers on computer diskette. This allows the professor to use a computer speech synthesis system which the school has already purchased for students and staff with vision problems. COST: \$2,600

Learning Disability

PROBLEM: Because of low reading skills a child care assistant with a learning disability has difficulty preparing lessons based on children's books.

SOLUTION: The employee is given a videotape of various children's stories and effective hand motions to review. COST: \$50

PROBLEM: A "quick service" restaurant grill operator has a severe learning disability. He can not read, and can recognize only specific single letters on orders for hamburgers.

SOLUTION: Condiment bins are coded with the first letter of the item so that a worker can match the orders to the bins. In addition, he is taught three key words ("only," "none," and "plain") through flash card repetition. COST: Less than \$25

PROBLEM: A person with an attention deficit disorder works in a packaging facility and is having problems staying on the task.

SOLUTION: The employer provides a tape recorder with headphones and cassette tapes which contains music and frequent reminders to attend to the work. This reduces distractions and helps prompt the individual to focus on the job. COST: Less than \$200

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

PROBLEM: A worker who is deaf is responsible for inspecting underground water utilities. When the employee is underground alone, co-workers above ground need to communicate with him.

SOLUTION: A wireless portable vibrating paging system is purchased for the employee. COST: \$445

PROBLEM: A teacher with a hearing impairment has difficulties hearing the students' voices over the squeaks of chairs and desks moving over the linoleum floor. Also, the teacher can not see some of the students' faces and therefore cannot effectively lip read.

SOLUTION: To eliminate noise, used tennis balls are cut and attached to the feet of the chairs and desks. The teacher rearranges the desks in a horseshoe in order to see the faces of all students. COST: \$0 (The tennis balls are donated by an avid tennis player who would have thrown them away.)

PROBLEM: A technician in the telephone service industry uses a hearing aid. The job duties include installing and repairing telephone lines, which includes using a "butt-in" portable test phone that is attached to telephone lines being repaired. The test set interfered with the technician's hearing aid.

SOLUTION: A “butt-in” test set equipped with an audio speaker is purchased which allows the worker to test lines without having to place the test set against the ear. This device is also useful for workers NOT wearing hearing aids. In addition, the technician is provided with an amplified tone locator. COST: \$200

PROBLEM: A large grocery store wants to hire an individual with Down Syndrome and a mild hearing loss as a bagger/stock person. The concern is that he will not be able to hear the paging loudspeaker system that is used to call employees to different parts of the store for work assignments.

SOLUTION: A personal paging device, which is worn on the wrist or belt and which vibrates when activated by an incoming signal, is purchased for the employee. When signaled, the employee immediately goes to the office for specific instructions. In this way, the employer can be sure that the employee both heard and understood his assigned tasks. COST: \$350

Physical Disability

PROBLEM: A technical editor in the publishing industry has a spinal cord injury and needs to work lying on his back.

SOLUTION: A work station is provided that enabled the editor to work on a computer while in a supine position. COST: \$2,000

PROBLEM: A department store retail clerk with multiple sclerosis uses a scooter and has problems with stamina.

SOLUTION: The employee is reassigned to a department on the first floor, provided with space for the scooter, given a sit/lean stool at the register, and scheduled for first shift with every third day off. COST: \$200

PROBLEM: An individual who has a congenital heart defect which limits strenuous activity, and mobility limitations due to childhood polio works as a receiving clerk, which requires unpacking merchandise, checking it in, assigning numbers, and making price checks.

SOLUTION: A rolling chair with locking wheels, which adjusts to the level of the task. COST: \$200.

PROBLEM: A company vice president with arthritis has difficulty maintaining stamina during the workday.

SOLUTION: The employer provides flexibility in the vice president’s work hours and a recliner for her office so that she can change body positions to cut down on fatigue. COST: \$750

PROBLEM: A clerk with low back strain/sprain has limitations in lifting, bending, and squatting, all results of lower back injury. The job requires mail sorting and filing incoming documents in a large numerical filing system.

SOLUTION: Both the clerk and the documents are put on wheels. A rolling file stool is supplied for use when filing at lower levels, and upper-drawer filing is done with documents on a rolling cart, without need to lift or bend. COST: \$44

PROBLEM: A computer service technician with cerebral palsy loses function of the lower extremities. The job related problems include bending, stooping, balancing, and getting underneath the mainframe equipment to perform need repairs.

SOLUTION: An automotive repair creeper is purchased and modified with back support to enable the employee to slide easily under the mainframes. COST: \$30

PROBLEM: A clerk's hand has two large fingers instead of four fingers and a thumb, and her arms are unusually short. This makes it difficult for her to perform some of her job duties, including answering incoming phone calls and accessing a computer to check information for customer service representatives.

SOLUTION: A large button overlay is used on the telephone; and a ball-shaped device, with a pencil stylus going through it, is used to facilitate taking messages and typing. Also used is a strap-on hand stylus for straight typing.
COST: \$15

PROBLEM: An electro-mechanical assembly crew member acquires a cumulative wrist/hand trauma disorder which affects handling and fingering functions. This decreases his ability to use hand tools for the assembly of electro-mechanical devices.

SOLUTION: A rechargeable electric screwdriver is purchased, to reduce repetitious wrist twisting. These are subsequently purchased for all employees as a preventative measure.
COST: \$65

PROBLEM: A clerk whose job duties include delivering files and paperwork to various areas in a multistory building has multiple sclerosis which gradually makes it very difficult to move quickly and to carry heavy packages.

SOLUTION: A lightweight, motorized three-wheeled scooter with a basket is purchased for the employee. COST: \$2,000

PROBLEM: An airline programmer/analyst with post-polio fatigue brought on by stress cannot be on call 24 hours a day and work overtime as need.

SOLUTION: Waiver of the requirements of 24-hour on-call duty and overtime. The employee works the hours prescribed for older adult worker program participants of the airline.
COST: \$0

PROBLEM: An assembler for a furniture manufacturer has spinal degeneration, uncoordinated gait and balance difficulties. The limitations involve walking, carrying materials and balancing.

SOLUTION: Installing a plywood platform to raise part of the work station, suspending tools from the ceiling to balance their weight and using a cart to move assembly parts. COST: \$200

PROBLEM: An experienced electronics equipment inspector paralyzed from the waist down needs to perform tasks related to using precision equipment and assembly inspection; he needs rapid mobility around the plant.

SOLUTION: A heavy motorized wheelchair is stored on the premises overnight for his use in the plant. The employee uses his lightweight chair for travel. The bins containing items to be inspected are lowered, and a lap-board is provided for his specification books. COST: less than \$200.

PROBLEM: The back problem of a well-drilling rig operator is aggravated by the constant vibration of the standard seat in the rig.

SOLUTION: A scientifically designed mechanical seat is installed which allows the operator to make necessary adjustments of position, absorbing most of the vibration. The seat is used by all workers and prevents additional trauma. COST: \$1,100.

Mental Health/Psychiatric Disability

PROBLEM: A sales manager in a computer supply company is diagnosed with severe chronic depression. Although treatment is initiated, she continues to experience bouts of crying during times of stress.

SOLUTION: After discussion with her employer, she is provided with the use of a small room for privacy. This room previously was used to store office supplies. When she feels the need,

she can take a break and use this private area to compose herself. A new cabinet is purchased to store the office supplies. COST: \$200

PROBLEM: A productive worker with schizophrenia that was diagnosed and treated successfully years earlier has begun to show radical behavior changes.

SOLUTION: When confidential talks with the employee are not beneficial, the employee and employer agree that the employee will meet with a psychiatrist. The meeting results in a change of medication which regulates the problem behaviors. The employer pays for the counseling session. Cost: less than \$200

PROBLEM: A data entry clerk has agoraphobia and has difficulty traveling during peak hours of traffic.

SOLUTION: The employee's work hours are changed from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. to 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. COST: \$0

PROBLEM: A clerk-typist with severe depression and problems with alcoholism experiences problems with the quality and quantity of her work.

SOLUTION: Employee is provided with extended sick leave to cover a short period of hospitalization and a modified work schedule to attend weekly psychotherapy treatment. Treatment is covered by company medical plan. COST: \$0

PROBLEM: A human resources manager has seasonal affective disorder, a condition requiring adequate light during a sufficient number of daytime hours to ward off depression.

SOLUTION: A simple device called a sunlight box is installed in the person's office. COST: \$265

Medical Disability

PROBLEM: As the result of diabetes, a productive employee in a retail business is experiencing fatigue, and needs time during the day to administer medication. She is having difficulty performing her sales duties for a sustained period of time.

SOLUTION: The employee's schedule is altered to allow for a longer meal break and for special brief time periods during the day to administer medication. COST: \$0

PROBLEM: An insurance claims adjuster becomes ill when exposed to certain chemicals in the air (chemical sensitivity).

SOLUTION: The ventilation system in the employee's office is modified, and co-workers are asked not to use scented products. The employee is also permitted to attend staff and training meetings remotely by speaker phone and to wear a mask when need. COST: \$650

PROBLEM: A worker with a polycystic renal (kidney) disease is a senior technician in the coal industry who is responsible for the preparation of samples for testing. This employee requires Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD) four times daily, with one exchange occurring during working hours.

SOLUTION: Space is made available in the dispensary for the employee to perform CAPD while at work. Storage space is also provided for extra supplies to be used in case of bad weather emergencies necessitating a second exchange at work. COST: \$0

PROBLEM: A personnel manager with AIDS experiences a serious drop in energy levels during the mid-afternoon hours.

SOLUTION: A small chair that converts to a sleeping mat is provided. During a 90-minute afternoon break, the employee puts a Do not disturb sign on the door and takes a nap. All staff meetings are scheduled for the morning. The employee makes up the time in the evening or on weekends as necessary. **COST:** \$50

PROBLEM: An administrative assistant with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) has difficulty with using the phone, typing, computer input, completing forms and reports, and doing some filing.

SOLUTION: A cordless headset for the telephone is purchased, arm rest extensions from the edge of the desk are installed to reduce strain on wrists and arms, and a new effortless lock and handle are installed on the restroom door. **COST:** \$450

Head Injury/Traumatic Brain Injury

PROBLEM: A worker with traumatic brain injury (TBI) is employed at a bank, processing checks and other transactions. Items must be numbered and placed into a sorting machine tray in a special manner. The problem lays in periodic confusion due to memory loss and weakness in one side of his body.

SOLUTION: A job coach/trainer supplied by the rehabilitation agency assists in special training in task sequencing, and equipment is adjusted to accommodate weakness. **COST:** \$0

These examples are excerpted from materials developed by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Used with permission.

JAN: Opening Doors to Job Accommodation

WHAT IS JAN?

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the USDOL Office of Disability and Employment Policy, is a free on-line and telephone resource for anyone who has questions about job accommodations, or about the employment sections of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

WHO SHOULD USE JAN?

Employers, persons with disabilities, service providers, rehabilitation counselors, or anybody involved in helping a person with a disability obtain or retain a job.

HOW DOES JAN WORK?

There are two ways to obtain information on accommodations from JAN.

- Using JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR), an on-line database which allows you to search for various accommodation options: www.jan.wvu.edu/soar/index.html
- Calling JAN's toll-free information line, where trained consultants respond to questions, discuss specific job accommodations, and suggest additional resources to assist you.

CALLING JAN

All calls to JAN are kept confidential. If you are calling about accommodating an individual on the job, the more you tell the consultant about the required tasks and the functional limitations and abilities of the individual, the better the consultant will be able to help. When you call, the following steps occur:

- 1) The receptionist listens to each question and transfers the caller to the JAN consultant who is most knowledgeable in that particular area.
- 2) The consultant asks questions to obtain the information needed in order to develop the best solution(s).
- 3) The consultant searches a database of previous accommodations and provides as many potential accommodation options as possible. These may include:
 - different approaches to job tasks
 - proposed policy changes,
 - commercially available products,
 - different ways to use existing products,
 - resources for device modification/fabrication.
- 4) The consultant provides methods of implementing and maintaining the accommodation(s) and recommends processes for reviewing the effectiveness of the accommodation(s).
- 5) JAN staff will prepare and send materials in the format requested. Information can be sent electronically, faxed or mailed using the U.S. Postal Service.

As follow-up, the caller may be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding the recommended accommodation(s) and their usefulness. This feedback helps JAN improve services and assist future callers with accommodation solutions.

JAN staff has cumulatively over 100 years of experience and has delivered information on over 100,000 job accommodations since 1984.

HOW DO I REACH JAN?

Accommodation Information (Voice / TTY): (800) 526-7234

ADA Information (Voice / TTY): (800) 232-9675

Fax: (304) 293-5407

E-mail: jan@icdi.wvu.edu

Web site: <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu>

Mail:

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

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P.O. Box 6080

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