

Accommodation

There are an estimated 54 million Americans with disabilities. We see them at work, on the street, in our neighborhoods. They may be sitting next to you right now, but if the disability is not obvious, you may not even know it. There are hundreds of disabilities - congenital, late-onset, progressive (cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy), and some are episodic (seizure conditions.) Some are permanent, such as loss of a limb, and others occur and then go into remission, such as cancer. Some are invisible, such as deafness and diabetes, and all have differing degrees of severity.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701, *et seq.*), as amended, requires federal agencies to provide reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee or applicant with disabilities so that he/she may become a productive member of the workforce. Although many individuals with disabilities can apply for and perform jobs without any accommodations, there are workplace barriers that keep them from performing jobs they could do with some form of accommodation. These barriers may be physical obstacles (such as inaccessible facilities or equipment), or they may be procedures or rules (such as rules concerning when work is performed, when breaks are taken, or how essential or marginal functions are performed). Accommodations remove workplace barriers for individuals with disabilities.

Accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the individual's need, the specific disability and existing limitations, the essential functions of the job, and the work environment. Many accommodations can be provided at little or no cost, such as job restructuring; while some may require funds and time to put in place, such as acquiring or modifying equipment. In all cases, the employee must be involved with the selection of the accommodation, and management must work with the individual to provide an accommodation that will be effective.

For additional information or assistance with obtaining an accommodation at work, please contact:

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